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Northern Ireland, Territory, and Peace

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Northern Ireland, Territory, and Peace

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Abstract

This thesis argues the question of peace in Northern Ireland, and perhaps beyond, cannot be founded on tolerance, equality, or mutual understanding among *persons*. Peace cannot reside within a horizon of sameness, whereby bodies are posited as either dualistic or in-common. Both these positions engulf and dissipate the potential of the in-between as they approach the self and other as known identities graspable in their entirety. As a scholar inspired by a feminist politics, I approach the question of peace as an active, transformative making. This does not mean imposing a fixed, timeless or utopian vision of peace upon empirical reality and critically deconstructing the capacity of the real world to measure up. Nor does it sacrifice the potential of peace to the non-violent or less-than-violent; peace as an impossible perfection always-already subsumed by the originary position of conflict and agonism. Rather, I call for an alternative starting point that holds the capacity to attend to the ethical encounters of peace always-already respiring throughout the city of Belfast, Northern Ireland.

The starting point I opt for moves with, but also beyond, the thinking of philosopher Luce Irigaray. Irigaray conceives of the encounter as a relation of differentiation in proximity active in the sharing of breath. Epistemologically, I trace the movement and materiality of breath through a detailed ethnographic study of an Irish language centre in Protestant east Belfast. This tracing animates an understanding of peace as woven from the necessary relationality of autonomous bodies in active 'doings' that affirm everyday processes of socio-ecological care and reciprocity. The political emphasis of this thesis cannot be located in a critical assessment of the 'what is'. Rather, it moves with an extant, ecological weaving of alternative worlds making peace-full, if speculative, futures from within the immanence of the present.

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Author's Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the University's Regulations and Code of Practice for Research Degree Programmes and that it has not been submitted for any other academic award. Except where indicated by specific reference in the text, the work is the candidate's own work. Work done in collaboration with, or with the assistance of, others, is indicated as such. Any views expressed in the dissertation are those of the author.

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List of Abbreviations

CCRU	Central Community Relations Unit
CTS*	Centre for Trouble Studies
DE	Department of Education (Northern Ireland)
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
GAA	Gaelic Athletics Association
GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education
IFI	International Fund for Ireland
IRA	Irish Republican Army
KAT	Kill All Taigs
MP	Member of Parliament
NICRA	Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association
OCN	Open College Network
OFMDF	Office of First and Deputy First Minister European Union's Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and in the Border Counties in the Republic of Ireland
PEACE	European Union's Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and in the Border Counties in the Republic of Ireland
PSNI	Police Service Northern Ireland
PUP	Progressive Unionist Party
RUC	Royal Ulster Constabulary
SDLP	Social Democratic and Labour Party
SEUPB	Special European Union Programme Board
TBUC	Together Building a United Community
UDP	Ulster Democratic Party
UFF	Ulster Freedom Fighters
UKUP	United Kingdom Unionist Party
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UVF	Ulster Volunteer Force

So walk on air against your better judgement
Establishing yourself somewhere in between.

(Seamus Heaney, *The Gravel Walks*, 1996: 49)

Prologue

The Dance of Recognition

Sitting in a restaurant in New York, the soft tones of the Belfast accent float over, brush my ear and grab my attention. I am with a group of colleagues from England, and we have travelled to America on a work trip – a week of meetings, appointments, site visits and corporate dinners. We are just grabbing a bite to eat – or several bites with American size portions – in a traditional American diner before heading onto the next appointment. Sitting on dark leather booths, we scan the several menus scattered across the table – a drinks menu, an all-day breakfast menu, the lunch menu, the specials menu: so much choice!

The tones from home suddenly pull my attention away from the lunch menu I'd been gazing down at towards the waitress across of the room delivering mountains of food to a drooling table. Having set down the food in front of the hungry bodies, the waitress did a quick swivel on her toes and made her way towards our table, while freeing her notepad and pen from the pocket of the black apron tied around her waist. With a habitual but friendly smile she introduced herself and, as I was on the edge of the booth, she directed her attention towards me and asked: "what can I get for you?"

Across the expanse of the dance floor our eyes lock upon one and other. There can now be no avoidance; we must dance. However, we know the routine; learnt from an early age, we have danced it many times before.

A familiar sequence.

From our opposing side of the dance floor, we slowly draw closer together. One step at a time. Eyes searching the body before us.

"Where are you from?"
Our bodies crouch and our arms spread wide. We move around one and other in a circular motion; orbiting the same path, the same trajectory, a single line of movement.

"What part of Belfast?"
We size one and other up, keeping our space and remaining alert as we cypher the body we dance with — coding movement, shape, sound, and colour.

"What school did you go to?"
Questions asked, answered, and responded to consume the very presence of the body before us.

As one we dance. We move to the same beat. We pirouette in time. We twirl, we spin, we step. We sway to one rhythm. We glide together. We meet in unison; one movement, a single time, a common body. Unchanging, equivalent, transparent. Sameness.

The bodies around us stare on in amusement as they watch this dance.

A dance devoid of touch. Two bodies that never caress or feel.

A static movement. A stagnant dance. An eternal sequence.

Now one, now known, the dance ceases. We are in place.

The only remaining movement is our heaving chests grasping for breath.

Based on an interview, October 17th 2017

Introduction

So please, I beg you - live.
(Lyra McKee 2018: n.p.)

1.1 The Spoils of Peace

In 2016, a young journalist named Lyra McKee wrote a poignant and prophetic essay about the 'ceasefire babies' of Northern Ireland. Lyra McKee was a ceasefire baby. Born in 1990, she was too young to recall the worst of the bloody and violent war that had plagued Northern Ireland. She was still in nappies or, perhaps, just out of them when in 1994 the Irish Republic Army (IRA) called a ceasefire and, for the first time in thirty years, there was a feint glimmer of hope for a different future for the babies and children of the day (McKee 2016). Four years later, in 1998, the historic Good Friday Agreement was signed; peace in Northern Ireland had finally been achieved. Lyra McKee (2016: n.p.), along with the other ceasefire babies, had become the 'Good Friday Agreement generation' – a generation that, as she wrote, were 'destined to never witness the war but to reap the spoils of peace.' Yet, as she continued, 'the spoil of peace just never seemed to reach us.'

Violence on the streets of Derry/Londonderry[1] had been anticipated. In was the 18th April 2019, three days before Easter Sunday. Around Easter every year, the Easter Rising is commemorated by Republicans, to mark the 1916 Republican rebellion against British rule; the Rising laid the foundations for the partitioning of Ireland in 1921. The story of partitioning is largely settled in what became the Republic of Ireland. The story north of the dividing partition is, however, somewhat different. Northern Ireland witnessed three decades of bloody violence, commonly referred to as 'the Troubles', as the IRA pursued an armed struggle against the British in its quest for a united Ireland. Northern Ireland is no longer at war. In 1994, a ceasefire was declared. In 1998, a peace agreement was signed. And from 2007, Sinn Féin, the political wing of the IRA, has shared executive power with the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP). However, several small, angry factions of the IRA, who continue to regard the peace agreement as a sell-out, have been established. The most recent incarnation of dissident Republicanism is the New IRA, who have a strong foothold on the streets of Derry. The New IRA, along with other dissident groups on both sides, are determined to illustrate the constitutional question has not been settled and violence can once again be ignited (McKay 2019) – a threat that has become an intimate reality in the current political turmoil.

[1] Typically, Unionists refer to the city as Londonderry, its official name; Nationalist's prefer to call the city Derry. Derry is the anglicised version of *Doire*, which in Gaelic means Oak Grove. The prefix 'London' was added in 1613 to honour the Guild of London, who in the seventeenth century 'rebuilt the Gaelic settlement in the style of an English garrison' (Doherty 2007: 164). For the remainder of the thesis I refer to the city as, simply, Derry.

In 2017, after a decade of relative political stability and fruitful cooperation between Sinn Féin and the DUP, Northern Ireland's power-sharing government collapsed. Bitterness between Nationalists and Unionists has taken hold and hard-line, zero-sum positions have been adopted both in Stormont, the location of the Northern Irish executive, and on the streets of Northern Ireland. Brexit has compounded the instability. The decision of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union has rearticulated questions regarding the constitutional status of Northern Ireland – questions both dissident Republicans and dissident Loyalists argue have never been settled. Brexit poses a question over the border partitioning the island of Ireland; a question that could have devastating consequence for Northern Ireland broadly and, acutely, in the border towns and cities, such as Derry.

It was Maundy Thursday. Easter Sunday was three days away, and tomorrow would be Good Friday, the day when twenty-one years ago Northern Ireland chose peace. On social media images were shared depicting a convoy of police vehicles crossing the River Foyle in Derry (McKay 2019). They were heading for Creggan, a large housing estate sitting close to County Donegal on the border of the Republic of Ireland. When they arrived, the Police Service Northern Ireland (PSNI) carried out a series of house raids. They were hunting for suspected weapons and ammunition, fearful of an eruption of dissident Republican activity commemorating the 1916 Easter Rising. They found nothing. Their presence, however, was not to pass by without a response. Young men with hoods pulled over their heads and scarves gathered around their faces quickly gathered on Creggan's streets. Riots broke out. Bricks and firecrackers flew through the air, forcing the police to retreat to their armour-plated vehicles (McKay 2019). Petrol bombs were thrown (BBC News 2019). A hijacked van stood in a burnt-out shadow. Another car still lit up the dark night, as it continued to blaze (Rawlinson 2019).

That night, Lyra McKee left the safety of her home to report on the escalating violence. As she stood next to a PSNI vehicle watching with a couple of friends, she sent a tweet capturing the chaos of the evening. It read: "Derry tonight. Absolute madness" (in Carroll and Greenfield 2019: n.p., see figure 1.). Lyra McKee watched as those ceasefire babies, about whom she had written so compassionately, re-enacted a violence of which they had no memory. Young men cajoled by life-long narratives of 'us' and 'them', by stories of commemoration and suffering, and by the taunts of those who had lived through far worse and given far more. A generation who had walked to school staring down at their feet as the area was searched for suspicious devices. They had grown up navigating the spatial divisions of Northern Ireland, knowing those on the other side only by the rocks that hit them as they came flying over dividing peace walls. Their toy guns had been played with inside; if they played with them outside a passing army patrol or police jeep might mistake them for real guns and fire (McKee 2016). Lyra McKee stood and watched the violence, a manifestation of decades of division and segregation, produced at the hands of those destined to reap the spoils of peace.

Shots rang out suddenly. People began to run. A body fell to the ground.

On the 18th April 2019, twenty-nine-year-old Lyra McKee was murdered on the streets of Derry, the location in which the Troubles first erupted fifty years ago.

Figure. 1. Lyra McKee's final tweet sent from the Creggan estate on the 18th April 2019 as she watched the riots unfold on the night she was killed (in Carroll and Greenfield 2009: n.p.).

Four days later, the New IRA issued a statement to the Irish News claiming responsibility for Lyra McKee's death.

> On Thursday night, following an incursion on the Creggan by *heavily armed British crown forces* which provoked rioting, the IRA deployed our volunteers to engage… In the course of attacking *the enemy* Lyra McKee was tragically killed while standing beside *enemy forces* (Weaver and Rawlinson 2019: n.p., my emphasis).

The New IRA, a dissident Republican group, determined the death of Lyra McKee to be a tragic accident in the pursuit for Irish freedom (McKay 2019). The gunshots were an act of territorial defence against the heavily armed British crown forces; they were fired to articulate and protect the natural and innate claim to Northern Ireland against the British, Protestant enemy; Lyra McKee was simply caught in the historic spectacle of crossfire. Susan McKay (2019: n. p., original emphasis), a journalist and friend of

Figure. 2. Mural of Lyra McKee on Kent Street in her home city of Belfast, painted a month after her murder (The Guardian 2019a: n.p.).

Lyra McKee expressed her fury and heartbreak on reading the New IRA's statement, which at once claimed and absolved responsibility. She argued: 'Lyra did not die for Irish freedom. Lyra was Irish freedom' (see figure 2.).

Six days later, on Wednesday 24th April, thousands from every community filled the streets for Lyra McKee's ecumenical funeral at St. Anne's Cathedral in Belfast. In attendance was the Taoiseach, Leo Varadkar, the then British Prime minister, Theresa May, and the Irish President, Michael D. Higgins, who sat alongside Arlene Foster, the leader of the DUP, and Michelle O'Neill, the leader of Sinn Féin. The homily given by Father Martin Magill (in Cross and Madden 2019: n.p.) directly addressed the politicians standing in the congregation.

> I commend our political leaders for standing together in Creggan on Good Friday. I am, however, left with a question: why in God's name does it take the death of a twenty-nine-year-old woman with her whole life in front of her to get to this point?

A minute-long standing ovation followed these words (Gaw 2019). Father Martin Magill continued to plead with the politicians in attendance and watching in, those who repeatedly fail to address the issue of the Irish border in ongoing Brexit negotiations, despite the threat it poses to the Good Friday Agreement and its generation. He pleaded with those Northern Irish politicians who, in the suspension of Stormont, neglect the ceasefire babies 'who need a life – not a gun put in their hands… [They] need to feel the peace process is working for them' (Father Martin Magill in Gaw 2019: n.p.). Talks aimed at restoring Stormont resumed in the weeks after Lyra McKee's death, but it is feared momentum for agreement has drained and Northern Ireland remains without a functioning executive (Woodcock 2019). Brexit, in parallel, has descended into chaos and the issue of the Northern Irish border – the tangible division of the question regarding the constitutional status of Northern Ireland – remains unresolved.

Lyra McKee was a ceasefire baby; she was part of a generation destined to reap the spoil of peace. But these spoils failed to reach her. And the failure of these spoils continues for the ceasefire babies, and their babies.

Father Martin Magill's question remains: why is the question of peace only approached through the spectacle of violence?

1.2 Encountering Peace

Lyra McKee's life and death offer a starting point for this thesis. As a ceasefire baby and part of the Good Friday Agreement generation, Lyra McKee did not grow up amidst everyday violence. The Good Friday Agreement undoubtedly achieved a great deal. Today, for instance, the soundtrack of Northern Irish life is not composed from bombs and gunshots. The daily commute has ceased to include invasive stop and search routines. The pavements of Belfast and Derry are not lined with the living statues of the British military, and a haze of danger no longer clouds the country. The Good Friday Agreement was largely effective in ending the worst of violence; however, this elite driven agreement has failed to build peace (Brown and Ní Aolain 2015).

Northern Ireland's ceasefire babies grew up in, and today bring up their own babies, in acutely divided worlds. Despite the implicit agreement within the formal Peace Process to work to overcome divisions, Northern Ireland continues to be visibly (and invisibly) partitioned: culture, politics, nationality, religion, and territory continue to be codified as Catholic or Protestant, Nationalist or Unionist, Republican or Loyalist, green or orange.[2] Today, in excess of 50% of Belfast's population are living in segregated areas with either a 90% Catholic population or a 90% Protestant population (Bergström 2015). Over 93% of children are educated in defined Catholic or Protestant schools (Nolan 2014). The Peace Process has not simply failed to address the dividing legacies of the Troubles, but is structured by and, in turn, *institutionalises* political, cultural, and social divisions. These divisions legitimise continual allegiances to binary identity politics and to the reproduction of dualistic grammars of difference. These dualistic grammars are *necessarily* violent. The violence they construct operates largely invisibly as it works to shape the normal state of thing (Zizek 2008).

***

I heard it over and over again. I heard it on the bus travelling from the Belfast International Airport to Europa Buscentre. The same words were voiced again in the Puregym changing rooms on Adelaide Street, and in the Duke of York pub in the Cathedral Quarter. They were reiterated at meeting rooms, in the queues which formed waiting for stamps, across various counters, at parties as people mingled

[2] The terms on each side of this binary divide tend to be used interchangeably, despite a myriad of nuanced difference between and within them. In the context of the current discussion, a pertinent difference is between Nationalist and Republican and Unionist and Loyalist, with the latter on each side prepared to achieve their respective aims via violence and militant tactics which are often condemned by the former across both sides.

and 'worked the room'. Two questions opened each and every meeting: "*Where do you live? What school do you go to?*" With these questions, people navigate learnt territories, they encode predefined answers, and recognise[3] others as known *a prioris*. If you live on the Newtownards Road, you are Protestant; if you live in west Belfast, you are Catholic. If you speak Irish, you are Catholic, and probably a Nationalist. But, if you play the flute in a marching band, you are Protestant, and, more than likely, Unionist. If you go to St. Mary's Christian Brothers' Grammar School, you are Catholic, but if you go to Strathearn School, you are Protestant. If your eyes are close together, you must be Protestant, but if they are set far apart, then you have to be Catholic. If you pronounce 'H' with a breathy 'haitch', as opposed to the 'aitch' of the Protestant mouth, then you are Catholic, and so on.

I first visited Belfast back in 2016 on a two-week research trip. I had spent almost the best part of a year reading about the legacy of the Troubles and was fully aware segregation and sectarianism are still highly prevalent and dictate the life-worlds of those territorially embedded by the city. To see, and what is more *sense*, the division, however, is different. It is something no amount of reading can prepare you for. It is felt as uneasiness and was, for me, an outsider, a shock difficult to articulate, but it touched upon my body with every step. I was made aware, in a way I had not previously experienced, of my English-Irish body: was I crossing into an area in which I 'belonged', will they detect my 'otherness', my excluded and foreign 'theirness', will they overhear my accent, ask my name. Will I be figured out? Where, and by whom, will my body be located?

I was, in 2016, unaware of how embodied codes operate to construct a readable body recognised as either, and only, Catholic *or* Protestant. I did, however, become acutely aware of the repeated questioning following, if not all, then, most of the meetings that compromised my first research visit: Why are you interested in Northern Ireland? You have an Irish name? But have you ever lived in Ireland? Were you born here? Why Belfast? And you come from a British university? But your father is also Irish?

At the time, I was perturbed by the incessant questioning, which was less about my research, as might have been expected, and more about me. Each response was met with a further question. I soon sensed that I was not providing the correct answers; I was failing to surrender the information required – the detail through which embodied and habituated processes of categorisation could take place. But, at this stage, I did not know the recognisable answers. I had not learnt the steps of the dance. I did not know the routine. The world I knew, the legacy I had inherited, was not one divided by Catholic or Protestant.

Later, on moving to Belfast to continue my research, the worlds I found myself in were firmly polarised by the divisive Catholic-Protestant horizon, upon which the very foundations of the city rest. With the division between the two communities forming the backdrop to everyday life, I soon found myself

[3] Recognition is often mobilised as an activity of knowing or making, as re-cognition, which is inherently more creative than how I, following Irigaray, employ the term throughout the thesis. In the context of the geographical literature, recognition as I mobilise it may be better thought of as representation.

replicating and acculturating the steps of the dance of recognition. Answers to the inquisitive questions framing meetings soon became scripted by recognisable information. I also rebounded the coded questions back towards my partner, in what I quickly came to regard as the habitual 'dance of recognition.' The need to dance, the desire to know who was standing before me, took over and quickly choreographed all contact. I did not seek to encounter the body, to touch and listen-to the body I was meeting for the first time. Instead, I quickly learned to consume recognisable, short-hand codes.

My first thoughts on meeting someone, the questions that would vibrate throughout my body, were: 'are you Catholic or Protestant? Which box do you fit into? Where do you reside – geographically, culturally, politically?' When the information needed was not immediately available, or when it was, albeit rarely, withheld,[4] I found myself dissecting the conversation to search deeply for the codes that would identify and betray the body as Catholic or Protestant. The need to know, the need to position bodies stood before became addictive. It became a game: could I guess correctly? Had I mastered the codes those around me seemed to know intuitively? My desire to belong in the space my everyday resided in, came to script my perception, as I recognised others through an external 'filter of precomprehension' (Irigaray 2017: 63). When achieved, the answer meant little, at least to me; but knowing – the reduction of a body to a label – was imperative.

The habitual dance of recognition works to construct a partitioned horizon of sameness, wherein polarised bodies of the self and other are constructed as essentialised objects. Whilst this is largely an invisible violence, at times it erupts in acts of tangible violence. The bullets that killed Lyra McKee ricocheted from within the dance of recognition. The New IRA fired shots on the streets of Derry towards the PSNI. Those firing the shots were the ceasefire babies or their younger siblings. They were those who were born in the time of 'peace'. They had no direct memory of the brutal violence of the Troubles. Yet, via the interplay of territorial division and binary identity politics, they inherit a sensible horizon of difference that standardises an image of the enemy; an image that recognises *a priori* the PSNI as 'British crown enemy forces' to be hate. The PSNI were *pr*ehended as a legitimate target.[5]

The violence that killed Lyra McKee interrupted – if only for a moment – the stasis of 'what is'. In the wake of Lyra McKee's death calls for peace rang out across Northern Ireland, while gestures of peace and unity filled television screens. We heard about the hope and the tenacity of Lyra McKee and her work. And, more of us since have read her own words calling for a better future, for life and living. We

[4] When this information was withheld it was always a conscious act against Northern Ireland's divisive partitions articulated through the refusal of categorisation. Refusal, however, takes effort and requires circumventing aspects of one's life and up bringing that are unavoidably shaped through the Catholic-Protestant binary.

[5] The PSNI succeeded the Royal Ulster Constabulary (RUC) and was established as part of the Good Friday Agreement. The RUC had a 92% Protestant majority and 'was long viewed by Catholics as an enforcer of Protestant domination' (Archick 2005: 5). The RUC played a counterinsurgency role during the Troubles, which disproportionately and, at times, violently impacted the Catholic and Nationalist community. The Catholic community, then, came to fear the RUC, while the Protestant community viewed them as a 'symbolic conduit that went right to the heart of their identities' (Ellison 2007: 246) – their identities as Protestants and Unionists, and their political fight for the 'natural' union of Northern Ireland with Great Britain.

have also followed her own life in the numerous tributes that tell of how a small child adorned with an eye patch and in need of remedial classes to assist her reading, grew into the brave, young winner of several acclaimed journalistic prizes, and was later named by Forbes magazine as one its '30 under 30' in media in Europe (McKay 2019). We read of her kindness, her compassion, her affection.

Yet, we have heard only of Lyra McKee's life after her death and, thus, I echo the words of Father Martin Magill: why is it only in the cloud of death and violence that we look for peace? Lyra McKee's life voices peace-full instances, moments, stories, and relations active within the starkly divided and conflicted society in which she grew up in. If there are moments of peace always-already respiring within Northern Ireland then why do we only ever hear, and always tell, stories of war violence and vision? Why does it take death for peace to be heard and what do we risk by only listening to peace after we have heard violence?

Division is all too visible in Belfast. Living in Belfast requires navigating lines and borders of separation that are at once cultural, geographical, political, and social. It involves being pulled apart and bounded. Yet, instances of everyday, positive peace respire alongside division. Streams of Union Jacks blow in the wind as they claim bounded territories and the pained eyes of Bobby Sands stare down from the walls of west Belfast. Yet, as soon as Naomi learnt I was running to and from rugby training she immediately insisted on dropping me home, despite the different boundaries this involved crossing. While Catholic bodies walk along one side of the Albert Bridge as they leave the city centre, Protestant bodies stay firmly on the other side. I first walked along Albert Bridge just before Christmas 2016 as I headed to Turas, the Irish language school and site of much of my research, to meet with Linda.[6] At the end of our conversation, Linda wished me "*nollaig shona dhuit*" and embraced me with a huge hug, the warmth of which I can still feel today. The daily debates on the Nolan Show – an Ulster based BBC talk show – acutely voice the hard line political, social, and cultural positions of Northern Ireland as callers endlessly engage in zero-sum debates. The same voices, however, generously gave their time to meet, to talk, and to share stories: with one lady, a regular listener and champion of Stephen Nolan's 'hard-talk', offering her homemade Indian chutney as we chatted during the lunch break of her yoga teacher training course, another sneakily paying for the breakfast we had enjoyed as we chatted while a Dictaphone sat between us.

In focussing, in what follows, on the intimate relations of care, generosity, kindness, and friendship, my aim is not to gloss over the legacies of conflict and division that stubbornly persist. Rather, my aim is to illustrate and explore the desire for, and movements of, intimate relations of difference that constitute peace and peacebuilding. These, I argue, form the basis for cultivating an alternative ecological horizon which has much to teach us about the meaning and practice of peace, more, perhaps, than theorising

[6] Apart from Linda, all names in the thesis have been anonymised via pseudonym. Due to the synonymity between Turas and Linda we agreed together anonymising her name would be futile.

peace as the absence of violence. Indeed, as I will argue, care, generosity, kindness, and friendship are constituted in the always already relational, material grounds of lived intimacy that arise as the entangled and shared embodiments of everyday life in Northern Ireland.

In this thesis, I argue the question of peace in Northern Ireland and perhaps beyond cannot be founded on tolerance, equality, or mutual understanding among *persons*. Peace cannot be founded within a horizon of sameness, in which bodies are either posited as dualistic or as a common whole. Both these positions approach the self and the other as known identities, as graspable in their entirety, and engulf and dissipate the potential of the in-between. Rather, as a scholar inspired by a feminist politics, I approach the question of peace as an active, transformative making. This does not mean imposing a fixed, timeless or utopian vision of peace upon empirical reality and critically deconstructing the capacity of the real world to measure up. Nor does it sacrifice the potential of peace to the non-violent or less-than-violent; an impossible perfection always-already subsumed by the originary position of conflict and agonism. The political emphasis of this thesis is not locatable in a critical assessment of the 'what is', of the stasis and division of post-conflict Belfast, but moves with an extant weaving of alternative worlds making speculative futures within the immanence of the present (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018). So, I ask: how are immanent relations of differentiation in proximity weaving a positive understanding of peace from within living vitality respiring in shared exchanges of everyday sociality?

As I will argue across the chapters that follow, making an alternative ecological horizon that opens the potential for peace is neither a spontaneous occurrence, nor is it a blueprint preconceived from an external position. Rather, it takes shape from emerging, situated relations of extant proximity in difference that confronts the abstract stasis of 'what is' and animates novel and shared ways of becoming, through choosing controversial movements and continual reiterations of care. Of course, such often small efforts hold no guarantee of success. Neither are emerging 'successes' guaranteed to be permanent, unwavering, or reproducible in time or space. But herein lies precisely the analytical and political intent of this dissertation: to contribute to the durability and extension of a positive, everyday, relational ontology of peace that is always-already emerging alongside, but independent from, spaces and times of violence, by respiring with the situated relations and gestures of emergence, and so highlighting the comprehensive, if speculative, possibility and hope they offer as they weave alternative spatialisations of bodies and worlds.

1.3 Relationality as Ontology, Epistemology, and Methodology

A key claim of this thesis, developed in different ways throughout, is the answer to the question of, and commitment to, positive peace can be found through close movements with everyday relations of differential proximity already-active in the course of urban sociality. I use the concept of encounter – which I read as relations of differentiation in proximity – as a centrepiece for engaging with and detailing the materiality and movement of difference in Belfast. Everyday relations are central to the

cultivation and weaving of peace-full possibilities. It is through relationality that bodies touch-upon, move-with, and make difference. By difference, I do not refer to pre-determined and essentialised characteristics, performances, and labels, in which bodies are always-already known. Rather, I approach difference as a movement that is always becoming. The aim then is not to define or re-define differences and, so, what it means to be Catholic or Protestant, but to trace the relational movements of difference in their emergence. To focus on the everyday relationality of difference illustrates both the challenges of making and re-making peace, and the potential of relationality for opening on shared, peaceful worlds. Even within the acutely divided city of Belfast, I argue relationality can cultivate new and transformative ways of living and becoming that redefine and animate the becoming of an everyday, positive ontology of peace.

While I elaborate my approach to the encounter as a relation of differentiation in proximity, and the potential of such, in the subsequent chapters, some introduction to how relationality is conceived and mobilised as a prelude to describing the thesis and its structure are required. To trace the encounter as a specific form of relationality, encompassing both difference and proximity, mobilises the encounter as *more-than* the coming together of contact in space. Instead I seek to think through relationality as ontology, epistemology, and methodology. I have chosen to animate this engagement and attend to already-active relations through the vector of breath.

First, *I consider relations of differentiation in proximity as the foundation to an ontology of everyday, positive peace*. Geography has made a firm commitment to peace that extends beyond negative understandings and, in many instances, exceeds liberal models of democratic agreement and peace accords. Peace, rather, is understood as a fragile, iterative activity emerging from everyday, mutually constitutive relations and embodiments situated within an affective micropolitics. The commitment to problematising the content of peace and understanding the differential and spatial processes by which peace is constructed, contested, practised, and interpreted (Williams, Megoran and McConnell 2014), stems most prominently from critical geography and geopolitics whose theoretical commitments are firmly rooted within social agonism. Social agonism reads difference and, so, sociality as necessarily and irreducibly violent, antagonistic, and divisive (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018). Reserving, however, an originary position for violence and conflict precludes the possibilities of peace from the outset, critical scholarship, therein, is limited to the 'moments of violence…always present in our assumptions of peace' (Darling 2014: 244). Peace-as-peace becomes an impossible perfection as positive conceptions of peace are pulled back into a divisive horizon, wherein peace is limited to the non-violent or less-than-violent.

I opt for a different theoretical starting point and one that is perhaps unprecedented in the geography of peace literature, if not the geographical discipline more broadly. To read encounters as relations of differentiation in proximity is to animate an intimate engagement with the thinking of Luce Irigaray. Whilst Irigaray is rarely read as a political theorist, her work is inherently political in nature. Irigaray is

highly critical of the current hierarchical horizon of sameness which she argue is an innately violent structure. Her thinking, however, moves beyond critique and seeks the creation of an alternative ontological horizon, in which difference is both relational *and* autonomous.

Opposed to the self being engineered through rooted legacies that pre-construct the body before its birth, Irigaray illustrates the living body in a perpetual movement of becoming – a relational movement of difference which is always-already venturing beyond that which has been known and experienced in life. Relationality is the very becoming of difference; it is the materialisation of the autonomous to-be. To think difference as relational is not to forgo autonomy but, rather, to ground the becoming of autonomy within an ecology of relations. By 'ecology' I mean relational, dynamic, and, fundamentally, the mutually constitutive, ontological relations necessary for life and possibility. Within ecologies, the self and the other do not exist within an agonistic, hierarchical horizon of sameness, in which the latter is only ever the lesser version of the former. Rather, difference moves within a constellation of embodied and sensuous relations active prior to representational form, and thus beyond the limits of the binary self vs other; multiplicities here relate.

In placing relationality at the heart of the living and lively world of the everyday, I am choosing an ontological position that privileges not agonism and violence but an ecological, material, embodied, and dynamic sociality. To conceptualise peace as woven from the necessary relationality of autonomous bodies in active 'doings' affirms everyday processes of socio-ecological care and reciprocity through which shared, ecological worlds are created. It is in the elemental, relational movement of breath that the body, as a to-be, takes root and gives life, gives movement, towards the blossoming, growth, and becoming of the self, the other, and the shared in-between.

Secondly, *I deploy relations of differentiation in proximity as an epistemology attentive to breath*, wherein I move with breath to co-create knowledge about everyday relationalities opening onto the potential of peace. Relations of differentiation in proximity take place in breath. Irigaray locates the violence of the current horizon of sameness in a forgetting of breath. The creation of a new and shared horizon, then, lies in a return to breath and to the embodied practice of breathing. Breath folds in-between the inside and the outside animating a continual oscillation in-between relationality and autonomy, in-between tending-towards and withdrawal, in-between intimacy and distance, in-between differentiation and proximity. Breath, as the very movement of living vitality, is the element that holds relationality and autonomy in tension; it is the element animating relations of differentiation in proximity. The body, through the practice of breathing, cultivates the capacity to animate the movement of its own self-generation, yet this is a movement that is always-already in an emerging, embodied relation to the other, unknown body. I attend to the movement and materiality of breath to analyse the unexpected outcomes and political potential of an ecological horizon that emerges in relations of differentiation in proximity across Belfast – whether these encounters are mediated by Northern Ireland's formal Peace

Process, are outcomes of a conscious shift in orientation, or are unexpected and surprising interruptions to the normative.

I take the following questions regarding relations of differentiation in proximity, as animated in a sharing of breath, as my epistemological entry point to the study of everyday, positive peaces. The first set of question relates to the very becoming of relationality in a city as acutely divided as Belfast. How are bodies, worlds, and cultures approached from within a segregated society that has forgotten the very practice of breathing? What ignites territorialised body in a 'queer' movement that risks habitual, inherited norms and the stasis of the current horizon? A second set of questions concerns the very activity of encounters as an opening onto speculative possibilities for peace. Principally it asks, what happens *in* spaces of encounter wherein the self and other respire in relations of proximity in difference? This requires asking: how do encounters composed of breath animate extant, dynamic, and surprising relations in which differences emerge? And how do generative relations in-between transcend the division and territorialisation's pervading Northern Irish identity politics and its normative process to re-spatialise the political and, so, perspectives for understanding peace? The third set of questions directly addresses the ethical horizon of breath. They ask what makes breath a natural, ethical caring? How are gestures of care, which extend beyond tolerance and mutual understanding, woven and what do these relations look like? Principally this thesis asks: what does breath mean for peace?

The questions I pose here are not conclusive. Nor do I promise to answer them definitively. I move with these questions to trouble the stasis of 'what is' – both the empirical stasis of Northern Ireland and the theoretical stasis of the non-violent and less-than-violent – and to speculatively move with the openings animated in this troubling – a movement that perhaps animates more questions than answers. I write from within the specific space-time of contemporary Belfast. Yet, I contend the events and relations could and, what is more, need to be told from many other post-conflict societies if geography is to fulfil its commitment to a positive, everyday ontology of peace. This is not, however, to suggest universalising experiences and doings of peace. The 'weak' knowledge created is variable across time and space. To commit to a relational conception of peace, is to cultivate a contextual commitment wherein knowledge is always situated and local. Situated knowledge cannot make universal claims or gain hegemony. This is not my intention. Rather, I seek to tell stories of everyday relations within Belfast and the peaceful gestures these relations engender, even among the divisions and ongoing violence. I contend these stories provide a provocation for thinking about how we as geographers think and engage with peace, encounters, and the political.

Third*, I approach respiring relations of differentiation as methodology*. Moving with the ontology and epistemology outlined, I animate an affective, entangled Irigarayan methodology to trace breath and the relations animated in the practice of breathing. Tracing, as both methodology and method, moves with the ephemeral, relational, fluid, open, and sensual nature of breath. It cultivates an embodied, ongoing, and situated way of doing research and shifts familiar geographic methods towards the

creativity of touch, relationality, listening-to, and the poetical. Although deploying a range of methods, the activity of tracing necessitated ethnographic engagement, which I understand as 'an eclectic methodological choice…[privileging] an engaged, contextually rich and nuanced type of qualitative social research, in which fine grained daily interactions constitute the lifeblood of the data produced' (Falzon 2016: 1). An ethnographic engagement, thus, requires a deep and sustained engagement in the field.

Following two separate research visits in July 2016 and December 2016, I moved to Belfast on January 6th 2017, where I lived until November 19th 2017. During my first research visit, I continually heard about the Turas Irish language project. Turas is a space firmly residing at the intersection of Belfast contemporary territorial, cultural, and political divisions. It is located in the heart of Protestant east Belfast, a territory in which the Irish language is traditionally recognised as threatening, Republican nonsense. The Irish language has a long, complex and conflictual legacy across the island of Ireland but it 'has not been a causal factor in the modern violent self-determination dispute in Northern Ireland' – both the Catholic and Protestant community speak English (Mitchell and Miller 2019: 236). Yet, the language contained a deep symbolic significance during the Troubles that is today articulated in the current 'cultural wars' through which contemporary communal competition outplays (McMonagle and McDermott 2014). The Good Friday Agreement posed the question regarding the official status and protection of the Irish language and, today, Stormont remains suspended as, among other divisive issues, the DUP and Sinn Féin continue to search for an impossible agreement regarding an Irish Language Act, which the latter support and the former are intent on blocking.

The Northern Irish Peace Process has sought to address directly the ongoing cultural wars, as it seeks to create a society in which 'culture can be celebrated in a shared and mutually inclusive way' (Northern Ireland Executive 2013: 7). Shared, inclusive cultural celebration is destined as the outcome of good relations between the Catholic and Protestant community, built via join activities, shared learning, and respect for diversity. Traditionally, the Peace Process has sought to foster good relations via dialogue. As cultural expression is an increasing focal point of tension, the art and sport have also become principal arenas for building good relations across communities and their cultures. Language, also, has been noted as a cultural expression with capacity to bring people together and create a shared community (see Northern Ireland Executive 2013: 91). A shared language not only offers a unifying symbol communicating and promoting reconciliation (Ross 2012), but the practice of language learning holds the capacity to initiate a 'humanising effect' by animating an avenue for encountering 'another group's history, culture, and experience, and undermining the exclusivism of traditional myth-symbol complexes' (Mitchell and Miller 2019: 238). Turas is not a product of the Peace Process. However, it has animated a space in which peace is potentially being woven through sustained, intimate, and entangled, fundamentally *breathing* encounters. I engage with Turas as an organic, everyday space of sustained encounters through which the ordinary can be grappled with but not generalised from.

Whilst Turas is the principal focus of the thesis, I also speak from experiences firmly grounded within the formal Peace Process. Prior to moving to Northern Ireland, I initially secured desk space with the Centre for Conflict Studies* (CTS).[7] The CTS* is a charity engaging in the activity of formal peacebuilding and conflict transformation, largely through the arts. Although originally not intended as empirical space, before long I was engaging with and directly assisting the peacebuilding and conflict transformation work of CTS*. Whilst Turas exists on the margins of the Peace Process, my involvement with the CTS*'s work provided invaluable first-hand experience of the workings of formal peacebuilding in present day Northern Ireland.

1.4 Thesis Outline

My first substantive chapter – Chapter Two: Encountering Northern Ireland – traces the context of Northern Ireland. I discuss contemporary Northern Ireland with a specific focus on the capital city Belfast, arguing the territorial legacy of the Troubles engineers the other as a feared object, with the consequence that safety becomes predicated on avoidance. After discussing the current suspension of the Northern Ireland Executive and the threat posed by Brexit, the chapter moves from the present day to the historical context of Northern Ireland. Starting with the colonial conquest of Northern Ireland, I briefly trace the history of the island of Ireland. The chapter ends with a discussion of the Northern Irish Peace Process. I outline the political events that led to the historic signing of the Good Friday Agreement and detail the process of everyday peacebuilding within the community and voluntary sector, with a specific focus on the construction of good relations through cross-community contact.

Chapter Three addresses the coordinates informing my theoretical framework and empirical engagement. This chapter first reviews the literature around peace. I broadly situate my work within the geographies of peace literature. Despite theorising peace as an active process woven in the everyday, geographies of peace have largely failed – peace as an everyday, positive 'doing' remains a vague, untheorised concept. Following Harry Bregazzi and Mark Jackson (2018), I locate this failure in the dominant theoretical engagement informing the geographies of peace literature which, in taking social agonism as its starting point, forecloses the potential for theorising *from* peace from the outset. Peace, both theoretically and empirically, is reduced to the less-than-violent or non-violent. Peace will not be found in a movement of critique; peace necessitates change and transformation. Irigaray's work is inherently creative, particularly in its latter aspect where it moves most acutely with breath. It is the mobilisation of breath within Irigaray's thinking that this chapter next addresses. Whilst agonism reads difference as necessarily conflictual and divisive, the practice of breathing animates and moves with differences that are at once relational, autonomous, proximate, and dynamic. This theoretical movement opens the potential for an empirical engagement with the capacity to attend to the already-active peaceful encounters. The third section of this chapter considers the geographies of encounters literature

[7] In order to preserve the anonymity of the organisation this is a fictious pseudonym and acronym.

and argues if encounters are transformative spaces of making worlds, relations, and bodies differently, then, we need to begin to question what happens *in* spaces of encounter.

Chapter Four voices the affective, entangled, Irigarayan methodology that guided my engagement in the field and beyond. Geographers traditionally seek to map the focus of their research. The very movement and materiality of breath, however, evades mapping. Rather than mapping, an Irigarayan methodology animates an affective, entangled, and embodied tracing creating dynamic forms of 'knowledge' and 'knowledge-making' that are never static, definitive, or delineating. I detail the three principle characteristics of tracing – engaging the whole body, moving in-between, and situatedness – and then set forth the methods employed to animate a methodology of tracing. Finally, I detail the two empirical spaces that form the focus of my research.

Three empirical chapters follow in which I trace how encounters taking place in breath weave speculative, peace-full worlds. The fifth chapter – Breathing Movement – traces how the possibility for authentic encounters or, more precisely, relations of differentiation in proximity arise in segregated Belfast. Firstly, it details how the Irish language is traditionally recognised from a Protestant orientation. Here, I move in-between Irigaray's philosophy, Sara Ahmed's thinking, and the territorial nature of contemporary Belfast to trace how standardised truths, and their identarian politics, construct the Irish language as a threatening and fearful 'object' unavailable from a Protestant orientation. In the context of Belfast's acute territorialisation where movements across borders are approached with a hesitant caution, it is critical to consider the forces propelling 'queer' movements before we can begin to think through what happens in the encounter. I locate 'queer' movements towards Turas in curiosity and desire. Following Erin Manning, I read desire as a desire for movement; a desire for change, transformation, and becoming opposed to the territorial, rooted stasis of 'what is'. Bodies respond to the curious call from the other by questioning the stasis of one's own dwelling. Desire moves with an internal questioning that risks the sameness of the current horizon and 'queers' the body's orientation in an unfamiliar, novel movement towards Turas.

Before chapter six, there is a brief interlude. The interlude is firmly grounded in the peacebuilding cross-community work of the CTS*. Its presence is necessary to give voice to the present concerns and issues regarding the current structure and lack of freedom in Northern Ireland's the peacebuilding sector. What is more, it provides a contrast to the activity of encounters taking place in Turas, which is the focus of the next chapter.

The sixth chapter – Encountering Breath – moves with the space of Turas and the practice of breathing to begin to think through what happens in spaces of encounter. Irigaray's thinking offers three key aspects – wonder, silence, and sharing – of the encounter. This chapter respires with these entangled aspects. Wonder is the very movement of difference and, I argue, in Turas bodies are engaged in a practice of listening-to, in which they touch upon mystery and surprise as they experience the fullness of wonder.

Following wonder, this chapter next considers the movement of silence in the encounter. Silence maintains wonder by cultivating relational limits that respect the wondrous unknown, whilst also returning the body to its own breath and becoming. Finally, this chapter discusses sharing. To encounter the other in a relation of wonder and silence is to cultivate the potential for shared worlds moving in-between. To share with the other is not to become the other, but to share in third worlds emerging in the proximity and intimacy of difference. Moving with encounters requires a tracing of breath and folded within the chapter is the practice of breathing; it folds in-between the inside and the outside, in draws together different bodies as well as pulling them apart, and animates emerging and speculative dialogues in-between different thinkers. I contend encounters taking place in breath create an alternative horizon to the Catholic-Protestant binary that continues to characterise Northern Ireland twenty-one years after the signing of the Good Friday Agreement. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the immanent, if speculative, ecological horizon cultivated in a sharing of breath.

Chapter Seven – Breathing a Speculative Ethics of Care – respires within this alternative, ecological horizon. Moving with an alternative, transformed horizon, which does not view difference as necessarily agonistic; is necessary to become attentive to the everyday, peaceful relations always-already being woven. Peace is woven through relations of love, friendship, compassion, nurture, trust, and care – gestures of *care* compose the focus of this chapter. Theoretically the chapter moves in-between Irigaray's ethics and María Puig de la Bellacasa's speculative ethics of care. Puig de la Bellacasa conceives of care as an everyday relationality cultivating the perpetual renewal of life, bodies, and worlds: it is an ethics germinating in speculative, aerial ecologies in their making. I argue that breath is always-already a speculative opening to a natural, ethical caring for the living vitality of the self and of the (human or non-human) other in an ongoing and shared relation in-between. Having traced the theoretical argument and considered the limits of breath as a gesture of care, the chapter details the relational processes through which peaceful relations emerge. Tolerance is first discussed as a failure of care and, in turn, a failure of peace-as-peace. The next two sections consider care as, first, an affective agency and, secondly, as a loving commitment, with the former consideration grounded in the peacebuilding work of the CTS* and the latter in the space of Turas. Care as an affective agency holds practical and material consequences weaving moments of peace. However, as caring spaces are pulled to the political vision of the elite, affectivity is also bound up with fatigue, calculability, and greed. The fourth section traces Turas as a space respiring with love which, I argue, animates an obliging commitment of caring for the Irish language across territorial difference. This chapter concludes by thinking through the commoning cultivated in a respiring ethics of care. I mobilise the term commoning not as an 'abstraction *from* the world but an active force *of* this world' (Thiele 2014: 203, original emphasis); as a thinking-practice implicated and concerned with making peaceful worlds.

The concluding chapter posits peace as an everyday, care-full weaving in-between bodies and worlds actively unfolding an alternative, transformed horizon that we are always-already part of. Peace is active, relational, ecological, embodied, situated, everyday, and always-already emerging. In the

conclusion, I offer a series of implications that are academic and practical, with both empirical and methodological ramification for peace and geography more broadly. These implications are not necessarily clear cut and the conclusions they suggest are neither definitive nor decisive but open and ephemeral. They are implications calling out for engagement, relationality, questioning, and critique, as this thesis is read and mobilised in a manner that exceeds its own limited parameters.

Throughout, the thesis is intersected with 'respites' and 'interruptions'. Respites directly voice the situated practices of breathing that the thesis respires with. Following Magdalena Górska (2016), the respites are intended to act as a poetic voice of the dispersed potentiality of breath respiring with, yet always exceeding, the implications of the thesis. They draw the body back to breath and offer a short break or pause in the text providing the space-time to breathe. The respites fold within and in-between the different lines of argument, entangling them in a shared respiration that continues beyond the text. Alongside respites, I offer several interruptions. These interruptions interject the narrative with moments and instances of violence, conflict, and division. They bring the body back to the reality of Belfast and demonstrate the constant struggle between conflict and peace. They are also a theoretical statement arguing against a negative conception of peace and an originary position for violence or peace. Conflict and peace exist simultaneously, and these respites and interruptions call upon the reader to recognise that within pervasive and persistent violence and division there is always-already relations opening onto the speculative possibility of peace.

Encountering Northern Ireland

2.1 The Dual City: Belfast today

These places are the deep black holes, you know the whole Lion King: anywhere the light touches in yours; these were the dark shadow land you must never go to.
(Dan, Interview September 2nd 2017)

With a burgeoning food and bar scene, hip cities brimming with energy and the breath-taking Causeway coastline, Northern Ireland, and particularly its capital city, have put their mark on the map as one of Europe's most friendly, spirited, and lively spots (Lonely Planet 2019). In the last twenty years Belfast has blossomed. Contemporary Belfast celebrates an energy, stylishness and regeneration. This externally projected narrative masks, however, a very different reality.

> What sort of place is Northern Ireland? You could come as a tourist or on business – particularly on a sunny day – and believe that everything is normal, indeed that you are in a very attractive place. Most visitors will have heard of the Troubles, but it is easy to believe superficially that they are over and done with. However, if you picked up a local newspaper, switched on the radio, tuned into the local Twitter traffic, or visited in July, you would quickly recognise that all is not, even twenty years after the peace agreement was signed, entirely well with Northern Ireland... It is possible to live and work almost entirely normally in Northern Ireland – especially with eyes wide shut – but it is not a normal place (Cosstick 2019: 1).

Northern Ireland – in more ways than one – is characterised by the duality of two distinct realities, two parallel worlds. On the one hand, Northern Ireland projects an image of growth, style, and cosmopolitanism, with the sparkling, glass dome of Victoria Square and the bright, bustle of the Titanic Quarter. An estimated 4.9 million people visited Northern Ireland in 2018 (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2018), with The Guardian and Observer readers 'voting Belfast 'Best UK City' in the papers' 2016 travel awards' (Wilson 2016: 63). Yet, on the other hand, and despite last year marking the twentieth anniversary of the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, Northern Ireland is suspended in an unwavering stasis: troubling and emotive legacy issues remain unresolved; Stormont is in limbo; paramilitary groups continue to assert violent control and spread sectarian ideology; children are still divided by segregated education; and, everyday worlds remain rooted in fragmented and bounded territories.

Territory often provides the focal point to any ethnonational conflict. Violence is routinely grounded in the active process of territorialisation wherein impermeable boundaries of exclusion and inclusion are constructed. Territorialisation is not a passive process (Megoran 2013); it spatialises land through identifications claimed via acts of power, dominance, and belonging (Cowen and Gilbert 2008). The territorial legacy of violence has arguably left the deepest and most visible mark upon Belfast, with the capital acting as the principal 'theatre for the drama of fragmentation' (McFarlane 2018: 1008, see

also Davidson and Iveson 2015; Massey 2007; Roy 2016a).[8] Usually approached through the four cardinal points, today Belfast is a mosaic of different villages, each with a distinct identity – Catholic or Protestant – and a defined territorial boundary. In north Belfast a patchwork plays out almost at a street level, with neighbouring housing estates having a dominant Catholic or Protestant identity. In contrast, save for the largely Protestant Shankill Road, west Belfast persists as almost exclusively Catholic. East Belfast tends to be mostly Protestant apart from the Catholic enclave of Short Strand. Meanwhile, 'anchored by Queen's University,' south Belfast 'demonstrates less definition in the separation of communities, with some pockets of mixed neighbourhoods' (Hocking et al. 2018: 3). Belfast's borders replicate the constitutional border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, which remains a central symbolic feature of political and cultural discord (Shirlow and Murtag 2006).

The boundaries of Belfast's mosaic of villages are visually marked by 'peace' walls, flags, graffiti, murals and painted kerbstones. Constructed in response to escalating violence and disorder between the Catholic and Protestant communities during the Troubles (Gormley-Heenan, Byrne, and Robinson 2013),[9] peace walls were originally conceived as temporary measures to increase feelings of security (Shirlow 2008). Peace walls have become, however, a permanent feature of Northern Ireland's landscape, with in excess of one hundred barriers in existence today (Belfast Interface Project 2017). Utilising religion as a boundary marker (Shirlow and Murtag 2006), peace walls and symbolic markings operate to bound space as the influence of a determined ethnonational community (Shirlow 2003a; Komarova and McKnight 2013). Symbolic markings also work internally, both to define and control the interests of those residing within the bounded territory (Marijan 2015), and to haunt the space with the legacy of a violent historical memory predicated on an us-them narrative (Rieff 2011).

The continued partitioning and fixing of space in Belfast have overwhelmingly been engineered through a 'fear of that which is not us' (Manning 2000: 53). Fear is not simply an individual state but also a collective and social experience, embedded in moral, political, and social geographies (Pain and Smith 2008). Territorial boundaries and symbolic markings work together to produce the fearful body as distinctly separate, as apart from the feared body. Fear, then, simultaneously works through proximity and division. It spatialises two bodies within a binary horizon of sameness by bringing the very presence of the feared other into the construction of the fearful, pure, and moral self, whilst also forging an oppositional distinction, and so separation, between the two (Ahmed 2003, 2004). Separation becomes tangible through the erection of walls, and borders which construct an impermeable boundary marking

[8] . Of approximately 3,700 deaths, Belfast witnessed roughly 40% of these, although less than 20% of the regional population lived in the capital (Dixon 2008; Gaffikin and Morrissey 2011). Two thirds of Northern Ireland's sectarian killings occurred inside the capital's boundaries (McAlister 2011; Morrissey and Smyth 2001).

[9] The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) set a target in 2012 for removing the peace walls by 2023 (Wilson 2016: 65). In the face of minimal progress and with communities continuing to locate feelings of security and comfort in the sustained presence of the physical barriers, this target seems unattainable and even unrealistic (see Belfast Telegraph 2015). The 2016 Peace Monitoring Report indicated 30% of people wanted the walls to remain intact, with 78% of the respondents believing removal would result in incidents of anti-social behaviour and/or sectarian violence (Wilson 2016).

the point where we end and they begin (Harris et al. 2017); a clear dividing line between us and them (Barad 2014), between safe and unsafe. Peace walls maintain the other in an abeyance of 'drawing-close' (Heidegger 1962: 80). The other is always there but 'not quite present' (Ahmed 2004: 65).

Ian Shuttleworth and James Anderson (2002: 151) describe fear as a 'deeply conditioned reflex' the body is habitually conditioned to feel when travelling through unknown spaces represented as dangerous. Fear activates a habitual turn towards spaces that are represented as safe and a movement away from spaces that are known as unsafe (Ahmed 2006). These habits coalesce in collective geographical imaginaries that engineer highly segregated patters of movement around Belfast:[10] 'who goes where, when, why and along what routes is an ingrained feature of the local 'geographic imagination'' (Whyatt et al. 2016: n.p.). Ideological maps of fear and anxiety spatially manifest through routes, paths, and directions of movement (England and Simon 2010). Belfast is navigated by visible borders that – alongside more silent and hidden, if no less real, boundaries (Kuusisto 2001; Marijan 2015; Rajaram and Grundy-Warr 2007) – act as geographical coordinating devices (Bude and Dürrschmidt 2010). These coordinating devices pilot unsafe spaces via avoidance, evasion, and removal (Pain and Smith 2008); they minimise the potential for contact across dividing lines (Bell and Young 2013; Hocking et al. 2018). Thus, in post-conflict Belfast 'civic and social life tends to occur within, rather than across ethnic cleavages' (Nagle 2013: 78). Although operative in the everyday, division and segregation is firmly rooted in Northern Ireland's contemporary political framework, which I now turn my attention to.

2.1.1 The failure of power sharing

Political ideology in Northern Ireland is firmly entrenched in territorial dualisms. The Good Friday Agreement institutionalised a power-sharing Northern Irish Assembly, representing both the Unionists and the Nationalists through the First Minister and the Deputy First Minister, who together head up the Northern Ireland Executive (Mac Ginty, Muldoon and Ferguson 2007). As joint chairs of the Executive, the First Minister and Deputy First Minister are required to pursue agreement on all issues. If either the First or Deputy Minister resigns, then, by default the other automatically ceases to hold office and their parties, which will always be the largest party within the largest political designation and the largest party within the second-largest political designation, must nominate new heads of state (Torrance 2018). Segregation ensures the dominant Unionist party and the dominant Nationalist party are both represented in the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM), while power-sharing works to institutionalise Protestant Unionism and Catholic Nationalism (Mac Ginty, Muldoon and Ferguson 2007). As Colin Knox (2010: 8) articulates, devolution in Northern Ireland is 'inextricably linked to the

[10] The segregated patterns of movement around Belfast are well researched. A significant proportion of this research engages with fear in a broad sense (see England and Simon 2010; Shirlow 2003a, 2008; Shirlow and Murtagh 2006), whilst others take a more focussed perspective considering, for example, the interaction between fear and mobility in the context of leisure (Bairner and Shirlow 2003), the border (Bell, Jarman and Harvey 2010), sport (Hargie, Dickinson and O'Donnell 2006), and adolescents (Leonard 2010; McAlister, Scraton and Haydon 2014; McGrellis 2010; Roche 2008; Roulston et al. 2017).

divisive issues which precipitated its inception and characterises its operation in practice.' Northern Irish devolution takes segregation as an unwavering given and grounds its power in 'sectarian headcounts (Mitchell 2006), which in turn preserves the segregated structure of Northern Irish society.

From the outset devolution has not been an easy path. It was almost a decade after the Good Friday Agreement before a functioning Northern Ireland Executive was established. In 2007 the DUP leader Ian Paisley was nominated as First Minister and Sinn Féin's leader, Martin McGuinness, became Deputy First Minister. For almost ten years Northern Ireland experienced political stability as devolution operated relatively successfully (Torrance 2018), with the 2016 Peace Monitoring Report declaring: 'the devolved ship of state' is more stable than it has been for some time (Wilson 2016: 11). In January 2017, however, things drastically changed.

Following a scandal regarding flaws in the Renewable Heat Incentive, which was initially overseen by the now First Minister Arlene Foster, devolution collapsed. Foster refused to temporarily stand aside during an investigation into the renewable energy scheme, prompting McGuinness to resign as Deputy First Minister in protest which, in turn, sent the Northern Ireland Executive into chaos (Archick 2018). On the 2nd March 2017 an election was held, which reconfirmed the DUP and Sinn Féin as the two largest parties, but for the first time in Northern Irish history there was no longer a Unionist majority. After the election, an initial round of talks regarding the formation of an Executive were initiated. No agreement was reached and, on the 27th March, the statutory time limit for appointing Ministers passed. The deadline for the second round of talks passed on the 18th April and on the 27th the statutory time limit for creating an Executive was extended to 108 days (Torrance 2018). A third, fourth, and fifth round of talks ceased without agreement, as each party placed the onus for progress with the other party (Gray et al. 2018). Sinn Féin's demand for a standalone Irish Language Act, which the DUP continually oppose, alongside legacy issues and disagreements regarding same-sex marriage (Archick 2018), produced the repeated conclusion of stalemate.

Back in 2006 the UK and Irish Government reached a power-sharing package in the St. Andrews Agreement. This agreement included a commitment to the Irish language.

> The Government will introduce an Irish Language Act reflecting on the experience of Wales and Ireland and work with the incoming Executive to enhance and protect the development of the Irish language (St. Andrews Agreement, Annex B).

When it came to the British Government granting legislative effect to St. Andrews Agreement, any reference to an Irish Language Act was omitted. Rather, the agreement empowered the Northern Irish Executive to adopt strategies for both the Irish language and Ulster-Scots – the support for and importance of which 'vary in accordance with the political outlook of the day' (Carruthers and Mainnín 2018: 168). The 2016 Assembly election resulted in the reassignment of the portfolio of actions under the language strategies from a Sinn Féin minister to a DUP minister, resulting in a change of priorities and cutting of grants to Irish learners from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. Alongside

worries of cross-border funding in a post-Brexit political landscape, these cuts contributed to the deterioration of relations between the Sinn Féin and the DUP and, so, the collapse of the Assembly in 2017. Sinn Féin continues to be a staunch advocate of legislated protection for the Irish language but the DUP deny such language rights on the grounds of cost, community relations, and perceived uselessness, and deny any consent to the proposal of an Irish Language Act at St. Andrews in 2006 (McMonagle 2010; McMonagle and McDermott 2014). The collapse of the Executive and the ongoing failure to restore a functioning Assembly resides in opposing cultural contestations, firmly grounded in stark 'us-them' narratives and mobilised in aggressive and disrespectful language. Post-conflict politics continues to reproduce a fear of the other and uncompromising territorial division. As Robbie McVeigh and Bill Rolston (2007: 10) have argued 'it [the Peace Process] engendered not so much a society "free" from sectarianism as one in which sectarianism is institutionalized in new forms.'

The hardening of Northern Ireland's sectarian division has played out against the United Kingdom's decision to leave the European Union. England campaigned and cast its votes with little consideration of, or even obliviousness to, the danger leaving the European Union poses for those living on the island of Ireland. Yet, England has made its decision, and in a repeat of colonial history, Northern Ireland is 'just dragged along with it' (Feenan in Harris 2019: n.p.), despite 56% of the Northern Irish vote aligning to remain (BBC News 2016). Brexit calls into question the constitutional status of Northern Ireland and has resulted in a huge amount of contention regarding the border on the island of Ireland (see figure 3). The Good Friday Agreement acknowledged Northern Ireland as part of the United Kingdom but placed the future of state's constitutional status in the hands of the people, leaving open the potential for a united Ireland if the majority of Northern Ireland demonstrate this desire (Campbell, Nı Aoláin and Harvey 2003). With Brexit now on the horizon, there is an ongoing debate as to whether the potential of holding a border poll has been pushed further up the political agenda (Sturgeon and Lucas 2018; Archick 2018; Gray et al. 2018). Playing into the revival of this questions is the implications of the Brexit decision for the Northern Irish border (Gray et al. 2018).

Since the Good Friday Agreement, the circuitous three-hundred-mile land border between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland has effectively disappeared in terms of the free movement of goods, people, and services (Sturgeon and Lucas 2018). Freedom of movement across the border has been widely acknowledged as an essential component to the development of Northern Irish peace (Archick 2018). The border on the island of Ireland may be frictionless but the political, economic, and social reality of the border cannot be ignored: 'two sovereign states exist on either side of it. Two different currencies are used. Social, political, and economic policy is different' (Gray et al. 2018: 54). While leaders in the United Kingdom, in the Republic of Ireland, and across the European Union have repeatedly stated the desire to avoid a return to a hard border, it has become increasingly questionable how this will be possible in the face of the United Kingdom pursuing a 'hard Brexit' (Archick 2018) or, indeed, a no-deal Brexit.

Figure. 3. A sign in Derry protesting against a soft or hard border on the island of Ireland (author's own, 8th September 2017).

The border was an intense site of violence during the Troubles. Hundreds of checkpoints were created along this divisive border, which provided a focal point of violence between British soldiers and the IRA (Donnan and Simpson 2007; Archick 2018); it is this violence Brexit may resurrect. The Exiting the EU Committee (2017: 40, para 112) have stated:

> Many in Ireland are deeply concerned that the introduction of new and visible border check points would provide an opportunity and focal point for those who wish to disrupt the peace and feed a sense in some communities that the Good Friday Agreement was being undermined.

Reinstating a hard border poses a considerable security risk, with George Hamilton, Chief Constable for PSNI, warning of the potential for the return of violence at the border from dissident Republicans (McDonald 2018). Researching public attitudes on Brexit, John Garry et al. (2018: 6) confirmed the breadth of Hamilton's fears stating there is a strong public expectation 'protests against either North-South or East-West border checks would quickly deteriorate into violence.' As Bertie Ahern, the former Taoiseach and a key figure behind the Good Friday Agreement, commented:

> There is not going to be a physical border across Ireland because if you tried to put it there you wouldn't have to wait for terrorism to take it down, people would just physically pull it down – the ordinary people (BBC News 2018: n.p.).

With the challenges posed by Brexit, and at a time when Northern Ireland has been without a functioning executive for more than two years, it seems segregation may not only prevail in both space and time but there may even be a high potential for violence to erupt once again.

2.2 A City Born in Violence: A (brief) history of the island of Ireland

Violence and fear settled over that beautiful land like a heavy, unyielding fog.
(George Mitchell 2001, June 13, Special Lecture of the Sadat Chair in Telhami 2010: 43)

Northern Ireland has historically been recognised as a place characterised by violence, conflict, and antagonism (McKittrick and McVea 2012). Whilst the modern Troubles are generally regarded to have begun in the late 1960s (Jackson 1999; Hennessey 1997), their origins date back to Britain's colonial conquest of Ireland in the early seventeenth century (Dixon 2008; Ruane and Todd 2001). Land in the Northern province of Ulster was dispossessed and – 'in what became known at the Plantation of Ulster' – the province was seeded with British (mainly Scottish) colonists[11] (Gidron, Katz and Hasenfeld 2002: 47). With Henry III having broken from Rome in the 1530s (Brooks 2009), the settlers who came to find a home in Ireland's northern province were overwhelming Protestant. The birth of the Ulster Plantations established a foreign community, who embodied a largely alien culture and way of life, on expropriate lands which, in turn, relegated the native Catholic inhabitants to the periphery – both geographically and politically – of what had originally been their native holdings (Gidron, Katz and Hasenfeld 2002).

The removal and depreciation of the native Catholic population was largely justified through an us-them narrative, which characterised the natives as culturally inferior pagans in need of civilising. Although the larger native population continually posed the potential for trouble, the dominance of the settlers flourished (Clayton 1998) and, by the end of the 17th century, Protestant land ownership across Ireland had reached eighty percent (Dixon 2008). Protestant dominance was further cemented 'by the introduction of a series of 'repressive penal laws' implemented from 1690 to the 1720s' that degraded, harmed, and discriminated against the native populations (McEvoy 2008: 22-23). The Act of Union was passed in 1801 and Irish Parliament was integrated into what became the Parliament of Great Britain and Ireland (Dixon 2008). The Union, as described by John McGarry and Brendan O'Leary (1995: 212), 'became the bulwark of the colonial settlers and their descendants: the Anglo-Irish nobility throughout Ireland and the Protestants of Ulster'.

The birth of the Ulster Plantation established the broad lines of a conflict that would plague the island of Ireland for almost four centuries (Darby 1995). The outcome of the British state's policy of control and conquest was a unique and persistent system of relations; the configuration of two communities inhabiting the island of Ireland who possessed an unbalanced relationship to the British state. Joseph Ruane and

[11] Whilst it cannot be denied Ireland fell prey to the victim of British colonial expansion (see Clayton 1998; Gidron, Katz and Hasenfeld 2002; Graham and Proudfoot 1993; Howe 2000; Kearns 2013; Lloyd 2000, 2001; Miller 1998; Proudfoot 2000; Ruane 1992; Ruane and Todd 2001), as Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin (2002: 32) argue the subsequent complicity of Ireland in Britain's imperial enterprise 'makes it difficult for colonized peoples outside Britain to accept their identity as post-colonial, which complicates the often easily performed allocation post-colonialism often makes in terms of coloniser and colonised.' Thus, Ireland cannot be considered as a homogeneous entity of oppressor or victim, but rather should be approached through a post-colonial lens that acknowledges internal differences and specificities (Lehner 2005).

Jennifer Todd (2001) illustrate the three components of the system of relations. The first, a set of overlapping binary distinctions: Catholic or Protestant, Gaelic-Irish or English/Ulster Scots (ethnic origin), native or settler, barbarous or civil, backwards or progressive, Irish or British (nationality). The second component was a framework of dominance, dependence, and inequality. The continuation of British control rested with the continued loyalty of the Protestant settler minority, which was guaranteed through the British state visibly displaying their enduring dominance over native Irish Catholics. The third component resided in the increasing tendency towards polarisation between the Protestant settlers and Catholic natives, particularly in terms of identity, interests, and politics. Thus, there was a system of relations that guaranteed the continued power of the British state in Ireland and, additionality, the establishment of the native Irish Catholics as culturally and politically distinct from the settler British Protestants. Benjamin Gidron, Stanley Katz and Yeheskel Hasenfeld (2002: 47) describe the polarisation of division that ensued from this colonial system of relations:

> Two rival factions, often living in close proximity, nurtured mutually incompatible ambitions and harboured deep suspicions about one another, with the Protestant camp feeling that it was under constant threat of expulsion, and the Catholic faction believing that its country had been usurped.

The two communities viewed themselves as two separate, largely oppositional entities 'divided by language, religion and status' (McEvoy 2008: 22). Whilst cultural and ethno-national markers characterise the differentiation between the two communities, it is within the violent system of colonial relations of power and influence that the contemporary war would be grounded (Clayton 1998; Miller 1998; Ruane 1992; Ruane and Todd 2001). However, it was religion – Catholic or Protestant – that came to name this differentiation of power.

During the 1800s, resistance to the imposed union between Great Britain and Ireland increased. By the end of the century there was a growing pressure for Home Rule – for the decolonisation of Ireland. However, among Unionists and the settler population, who continued to be overwhelmingly concentrated in the northern province, there was considerable resistance to this growing demand (McEvoy 2008). Ulster Unionists regarded Home Rule as a threat to the union with Britain and to British Protestant domination of Irish affairs (McKittrick and McVea 2012) and, thus, began to advance a campaign of political resistance alongside a cultural movement seeking to develop a distinct Ulster identity (McEvoy 2008; Miller 1998). Having battled three Home Bills, Thomas Hennessey (1995: 1-2) succinctly illustrates how, by 1912, it was acutely clear 'the 'Irish question' was in fact two questions: 'nationalists Ireland's relationship with the rest of the United Kingdom, and Protestant Ulster's relationship with Catholic Ireland.' It was a question regarding the relations of colonialism, of the relationship between the natives and the colonial state, and between the settlers and the colonised territory.

The third Home Rule Bill was passed into law in 1914, but the outbreak of the First World War drastically altered the political landscape (Dixon 2008). Irish Nationalism had originated as a political movement seeking to secure self-government under the United Kingdom. Yet, by the end of the Great War and following the 1918 general election in which Sinn Féin became the dominant party, demands abruptly

altered: Nationalists were no longer calling for self-government but, rather, for an independent Irish Republic (Hennessey 1997). This shift in nationalist sentiment was largely a response to the 1916 Easter Rising, which witnessed a handful of Republicans stage an armed rebellion in Dublin against British rule. Whilst the rebellion was initially unpopular (McKittrick and McVea 2012), when the men leading the uprising were executed a wave of sympathy emanated from the Catholic community, who were not simply members of a different Christian set but 'a colonised people, a conquered people, people who had been inferior from the twelfth century onwards' (Clayton 1998: 47). Consequently, 'public opinion shifted away from the Irish Parliamentary Party and Home Rule and towards the republicans and their demand for independence' (Dixon 2008: 4). From 1918, with the acknowledgement they had little sympathy or affection in Britain, the Ulster Protestants adopted a fall-back position by which they intended to secure exclusion for the northern counties of Ireland from any Home Rule arrangements (Gidon, Katz and Hasenfeld 2002). Sinn Féin won the last all-Ireland election in 1918 and the IRA launched what became known as the 'War of Independence' (1919-1921), an armed struggle to drive the British state out of Ireland. The War of Independence culminated in the partitioning of Ireland in 1921, with a devolved jurisdiction at Stormont in Belfast for the six counties of Ulster with a Protestant majority,[12] and a separate parliament in Dublin for the twenty-six counties of the Irish Free State (McKittrick and McVea 2012). Northern Ireland was born from an act of partition that largely failed to consider the historical differences and religious divides of the new state; differences and divides that quickly hardened as contention and agonism surrounding partition increased (Gidon, Katz and Hasenfeld 2002).

The decades immediately following partition were relatively peaceful. Yet, Northern Ireland was undoubtedly 'born in violence' and, before long, violence returned (McKittrick and McVea 2012: 4). Although the Ulster Unionists may have appeared victorious, their comfortable majority at Stormont failed to bring the political and national security they desired. There was increasing suspicion of the Catholic minority who has been denied their Irish identity and it had become acutely evident London was not as interested in preserving the Union as the Northern Irish Unionists, with the consequence there was a continual underlying fear British policy would shift in support of a united Ireland (McKittrick and McVea 2012). Mirroring the power relations of the Scottish settlers, these relatively peaceful times were characterised by discrimination against the Catholic minority at the hands of a Unionist regime keen to assert their dominance and control against the IRA threat from the south (Darby 1995; Dixon 2008). It was against this backdrop – a Protestant Unionist population fearful about the fragility of their control of Northern Ireland and a politically disenfranchised Catholic community who faced increasing discrimination from the Stormont government – that the modern-day Troubles broke out.

[12] Ulster in composed of nine counties. The Northern Irish border divides the province of Ulster with three of its counties - Cavan, Monaghan, Donegal – being in the Republic of Ireland.

In 1963, Terence O'Neill was appointed prime minister of Great Britain and he had a clear agenda for addressing Northern Ireland's colonial legacy. The reforms introduced by O'Neill were opposed by Unionist who viewed them as giving too much away, whilst Nationalists tended to view them not going far enough (McEvoy 2008). O'Neill's reforms did, however, pave the way for Nationalists to break new political ground in the 1960s and it was with this advancement that the civil rights movement, modelled upon the non-violent civil rights campaigns in America (Darby 1995; de Fazio 2018), became an important and novel political instrument (see figure 4). The Northern Irish civil rights movement was primarily fuelled by the newly emerging Catholic middle class (McEvoy 2008), but as a broad political movement it successfully embraced anti-Unionism in its breath (McKittrick and McVea 2012). The newly formed Norther Ireland Civil Rights Association (NICRA) organised a number a large civil rights marches across Northern Ireland. The second of these marches, due to take place on the 5th October 1968 in Derry, was banned. Yet, the decision was made to march away. Marchers were quickly attacked by the RUC, which led to the outbreak of violence between Nationalists and state forces in the infamous Bogside area. A series of other marches also ended in violence, and the 'civil rights movement which had originally hoped to secure its goals via non-violent tactics was overtaken be street violence and sectarian clashes' (McEvoy 2008: 34). In 1969 the British Army were deployed to Northern Ireland. Soon after the IRA re-emerged, and in 1971 murdered a British soldier in a movement that openly declared war against the United Kingdom (de Fazio 2018).

Figure. 4. Posters advertising the civil rights marches across Northern Ireland in the late 1960's, which are displayed in the Museum of Free Derry (author's own, 8th September 2017).

What had originated in the 1960s as a concern for civil rights, had quickly been turned into a constitutional question which was being debated on both sides by violent paramilitary activity (McEvoy 2008). The contemporary war was largely a question of who embodies the natural and innate claim to the territory of Northern Ireland, in which:

> …settler attitudes towards their territory range from a fanatical and if necessary murderous resolve to retain it [met with] an equally fierce resolve to work towards ending settler power by whatever means, including terrorism (Clayton 1998: 51).

The early 1970s were some of the most violent years and by 1972, following the decision to introduce internment (McEvoy 2008) and the Bloody Sunday massacre that drew international attention (Gidon, Katz and Hasenfeld 2002), Westminster assumed direct control over Northern Ireland (Dixon 2008). The next thirty years for Northern Ireland were defined by a bloody conflict, as the 'IRA fought an increasingly sophisticated guerrilla war against the British Army,' the RUC, and Loyalist paramilitary groups (White 2003: 89).[13] The Troubles – the remnants of which continues to define relations and politics within Northern Ireland today – are, thus, the contemporary 'manifestation of a centuries-old [colonial] antagonism between Ireland and England' (White 2003: 89). Between 1969 and 1998 over 11,000 contentious events were recorded, including armed attacks, terrorist bombings and shootings, and more everyday occurrences such as protests, arrests, harassment, and home invasions (Loyle, Sullivan and Davenport 2014). The Troubles lasted almost three decades and resulted in the death of more than 3,700 people (McKittrick and McVea 2012), with approximately 48,000 people injured (Hayes and McAllister 2004). Aside from the Basque country in Spain where violence was not characterised by the same intensity, the Troubles 'represent the most prolonged period of politically-motivated violence anywhere is post-war western Europe' (Wilson 2016: 166). On the 10th April 1998, the Troubles were brought to an end with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement, also commonly known as the Belfast agreement, which declared Northern Ireland was finally at peace.

2.3 A City Attempting Peace: The ongoing Northern Irish Peace Process

Attempts to bring peace to Northern Ireland were initiated as early as the 1970s. Yet, it was not until 1994, when the IRA declared a ceasefire that peace first became a real possibility. Between 1991 and 1994 political activity largely centred around constructing a negotiation space in between the two

[13] For a much more in-depth and historical account of the Northern Irish conflict see Aughey and Morrow 1996, Coogan 1995, Dixon 2008, Jackson 1999, Hennessey 1997, McKittrick and McVea 2012. While some accounts detail the conflict from both sides others concentrate on the experience of one side: McKay's (2000) accounts focuses on Northern Irelands Protestants, whilst O'Connor (1993) details the experience of Catholics, and there are many accounts who take their focus from security forces (see Dewar 1997; Ryder 1997) and paramilitaries (see Toolis 2000; Taylor 1997, 1999). There are also accounts of specific events, such as Bloody Sunday (see McCann and Shiels 1992) or the hunger strikes (Beresford 1987), and with the signing of the Good Friday Agreement there was a flurry of writings concentrating on Northern Ireland's Peace Process (see Darby and Mac Ginty 2000; Dixon 2008; Mallie and McKittrick 1996; Morrissey and Smyth 2001). In addition, there are a number of fictional writings detailing the experience of living through the Troubles and with the legacy of Northern Ireland's violent history, arguably most worthy of mention are *Trinity* (1976) by Leon Uris, *Journeyman Tailor* (1992) by Gerry Seymour, *Cal* (1983) by Bernard MacLaverty, *Lies of Silence* (1990) by Brian Moore and, winner of the 2018 Man Booker Prize for Fiction, *Milkman* (2018) by Anna Burns.

opposing parties. Two Secretary of States for Northern Ireland, first Peter Brooke and then Sir Patrick Mayhew, sought to bring the key parties together and, whilst these negotiations ended in deadlock, a vehicle was provided whereby parties could exchange ideas and engage in dialogue (McEvoy 2008).

Parallel to the Brooke-Mayhew talks, the British government were both publicly and privately enquiring about the potential for negotiations, and a possible ceasefire, with the IRA. With the collapse of the Brooke-Mayhew talks, the British government sought to increase its back-channel talks with Republicans, while the Republicans simultaneously sought to create an open channel of communication with Dublin (Dixon 2008). These channels were fuelled by the 1993 Hume-Adams talks. John Hume, leader of Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) who were the major Nationalist party of the time, and Gerry Adams, leader of provisional Sinn Féin, had reinstated discussions and in 1993 they issued a joint statement declaring without an Irish dimension there could be no solution to a Northern Irish political settlement (Hennessey 1997).

> We accept that the Irish people as a whole have a right to national self-determination. This is a view shared by a majority of the people of this island though not by all its people. The exercise of self-determination is a matter for agreement between the people of Ireland. It is the search for that agreement and the means of achieving it on which we will be concentrating (McEvoy 2008: 84).

Drawing from this statement, the British and Irish government produced the Downing Street Declaration published on the 15th December 1993. The Declaration attempted to 'attract Sinn Féin into a 'peace process' without alienating unionism' (Dixon 2008: 235), by tying together self-determination, as the Hume-Addams statement called for, with the need for consent in Northern Ireland for Irish unity. This carefully managed ambiguity successfully achieved Unionist support, whilst placing pressure on Republicans. Although the Downing Street Declaration was accompanied by several instances of brutal violence (see McKittrick and McVea 2012), with pressure on the IRA to 'declare an end to hostilities and to explore the possibilities for peace through dialogue,' on the 31st August 1994 the IRA issued a statement announcing ceasefire (Hennessey 1997: 288). As David McKittric and David McVea (2012: 233) express, whilst the future remained hazy, with the proclamation of a ceasefire 'one thing was clear: Northern Ireland has entered a new phase.'

With a ceasefire declared, negotiations were expected to begin immediately. However, the following years were dominate by protracted argument around decommissioning and demilitarization, and recurring Unionist concerns they were experiencing a movement towards Irish unity (see Dixon 2008; McKittric and McVea 2012). On the 1st May 1997, a 'new' Labour government was elected in Westminster with a 177-seat majority (Dixon 2008), which gave the new Prime Minister Tony Blair considerable authority both within and beyond parliament (McKittric and McVea 2012). After his election, Blair's first visit outside of London was to Belfast where he voiced his commitment to the principle of consent and his desire for peace talks to include Sinn Féin, who in September that year took their seat

at the negotiation table.[14] The talks were largely successful, and on the 10th April 1998 the historic Good Friday Agreement was signed.

Whilst the Good Friday Agreement was a landmark ruling, its roots lay in a process beginning twenty years earlier. The Agreement called for the devolution of power from London to Belfast and a power-sharing Executive with a safeguard of cross-community support for 'key decisions' (Archick 2018). The Agreement recognised the principle of consent[15] and formalised both east-west and north-south relations. Essential to the agreement was the recognition to self-determination through the principle of dual citizenship (Byrne 1999):

> ...the birth right of all the people of Northern Ireland to identify themselves and be accepted as Irish or British, or both, as they may so choose, and accordingly confirm that their right to hold both British and Irish citizenship is accepted by both Governments and would not be affected by any future change in the status of Northern Ireland (The Belfast Agreement, Article 1, paragraph 6).

The principle of consent crafted space for Unionists and Nationalists politicians to support the Agreement without abandoning their political goals, whilst the guarantee of dual citizenship allowed communities to support the Agreement without having to relinquishing their ethnic identity (Doyle 1999). Despite divisions in the UUP regarding the endorsement of the Agreement, on the 22nd May 1998 a referendum was held in which the north and the south of Ireland both voted in support of the Good Friday Agreement (McKittric and McVea 2012).

The Good Friday Agreement undoubtedly achieved a great deal. To align peace to the signing of an accord is, however, to reduce peace to a negative: a singular 'achievement' or final state marking the end to active violence (Wehrenfennig 2008). A negative understanding consigns peace to a point of reference representing 'the absence of violence, the absence of war' (Galtung 1964: 2). The Agreement did mark a point of transformation in the history of Northern Ireland, but it was not the end of violence. Peace is a complex, contingent, and fragile process active in relation to violence and the less-than-violent (Loyd 2012; Bregazzi and Jackson 2018; Darling 2014), and the Northern Irish Peace Process is no exception.

In order to get all sides to declare support for the document there was a need for the British and Irish government, who together largely orchestrated the agreement, to tactically build in constructive ambiguity (see Bell and Cavanaugh 1998; Dingley 2005; Dixon 2002; Mitchell 2009; Spencer 2010). Ambiguity helped form an agreement between the two conflicting positions as it left the future constructively open, with the consequence each side could strategically interpret the end result as a

[14] Whilst the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP) and smaller Ulster Democratic Party (UDP) and Progressive Unionist Party (PUP) participated in the negotiation, the inclusion of Sinn Féin resulted in the DUP – now the largest political party in Northern Ireland – and UK Unionist Party (UKUP) withdrawing (McEvoy 2008).

[15] The principle of consent was first voice in the 1973 Sunningdale Agreement (see Tongue 2000), illustrating the long roots of the Good Friday Agreement and the difficult and protracted process towards a peace agreement.

victory without compromising their politics (Dixon 2008; Graham and Nash 2006; Marijan 2015). Ambiguity, however, also cemented the Catholic-Protestant dualism by creating space for both sides to claim victory at the hands of the other.

With both sides declaring victory and policy making lying in agencies spanning both north-south and east-west, the Good Friday Agreement affirmed the 'legitimacy of different and opposing forms of cultural and national belonging' (Ruane and Todd 2001: 936). The principle of parity of esteem was quickly politicised as 'a partisan ideological battering ram between two increasingly segregated and polarized communities' (Hennessey and Wilson 1997: n.p., see also Ruohomäki 2010; Todd 2010). Between the two communities 'a competitive dyadic relationship developed' on cultural, social, and economic issues, with relations continuing to be interpreted in a conflict mentality of zero-sum gains and losses (Mac Ginty and du Toit 2007: 20). The Good Friday Agreement achieved a historic compromise between the two communities, the continual breakdown of Stormont and sustained geographical and cultural divisions in the post-conflict period are, however, indicative of the instability of a foundation of compromise. Opposed to initiating a transformative process offering a new shared future for Northern Ireland (Ruane and Todd 2001), two decades after the signing of the Agreement Northern Ireland remains a country haunted by the stasis of conflict.

The account of the Northern Irish Peace Process that has been given so far, has been focused exclusively at the political level and upon peace making. Northern Ireland has been widely researched. Overwhelmingly, such research has concentrated upon the political elite and the 'achievement' of consensus among political, national, and religious positions regarded as irreconcilable (Delanty 1996; Wehrenfennig 2008). This work has largely been guided by a liberal understanding of peace, or the proclamation that well-functioning democracies do not collapse into war and violence (Doyle 2005; Mac Ginty 2008). Although liberal peace does not conform to a singular model (Richmond 2006), following Roger Mac Ginty (2009: 695), it can broadly be defined by five key characteristics: 'security and stability, reinforcing statehood, democratic governance, sustainability of a peace settlement and the promotion of free markets.' Aligned to a rationalist perspective arguing reasoned outcomes will construct a peace that is just and fair, liberal peace has provided a relevant and applicable framework for analysing the outplay of the Good Friday Agreement and resulting Peace Process (see Bell and Cavanaugh 1998; Dingley 2005; Dixon 2002; Mitchell 2009), the power-sharing framework of government (see Horowitz 2002; Tilley, Evans and Mitchell 2008), and the promotion of deliberative democracy and communicative interaction (see Drysek 2005; Porter 2000) – the primary 'achievements' allowing for Northern Ireland to claim it is at peace. A liberal peace framework aligns closely to the activity of peace-making. However, alongside the making of peace in Northern Ireland is a parallel process of peacebuilding.

2.3.1 Building Peace

To impose a schism between peace-making and peacebuilding is to construct an artificial separation. Despite their deep entwinement, it is important to distinguish between peace-making and peacebuilding (Bush and Houston 2011; O'Brien 2005). Peace-making traditionally refers to a two-phase process that is overwhelmingly political-diplomatic in nature. The first step of the process is an initial pre-agreement phase concluding with the signing of a formalised peace accord. This step tends to be tied to a relatively short timeframe in which the emphasis is on conflict management, with actions being taken that are designed to limit, mitigate, or contain violence as accommodation and comprise between the warring parties are carved out (Jarman 2016). This stage is then followed by a post-agreement second phase, where the signatories of the accord 'work out the fine details of what they had agreed to in general terms' (Bush and Houston 2011: 8). Essential to the second phase are formal and informal peacebuilding initiatives concentrated at the civil society level, where there is at least some attempt to address the conditions within which conflict erupted (Power 2011).

The development of the Northern Irish Peace Process has been accompanied by the growing realisation conflict is considerably more complex than negotiating an end to active violence (Wehrenfennig 2008). This re-conceptualisation has introduced civil society as a key site for analysing peacebuilding in Northern Ireland (see Acheson and Milosfsky 2008; Byrne 2001; Knox 2011a, 2011b; McCall and O'Dowd 2008; Racioppi and O'Sullivan See 2007). Peacebuilding aims to 'address societal impacts and legacies caused by protracted violent conflict – such as fear, distrust, segregation, polarised communities, discrimination, sense of justice and so forth' (Bush and Houston 2011: 8). With a focus on societal needs, inter-group rights, and interpersonal relationship, peacebuilding encompasses a long-term process that has a fundamental role to play in the making of peace (Bush and Houston 2011). Conflict management and conflict resolution are pragmatic activities seeking to establish post-conflict stability through top-down elite led actions. In contrast, conflict transformation and reconciliation aim to challenge the status quo and, so, are more radical forms of action that demand a broad commitment across society (Jarman 2016). There is no singular, agreed definition of conflict transformation but, in a 2018 report of peace funding in Northern Ireland, Duncan Morrow, Lisa Faulkner-Byrne and Sean Pettis (2018: 15) determine reconciliation based conflict transformation work to encompass: 'finding a way to live that permits a vision of the future; the (re)building of relationships; coming to terms with past acts and enemies; society-wide, long-term process of deep change; [and a] process of acknowledging, remembering, and learning from the past.' Most prominently the work of peacebuilding and reconciliation organisations includes 'efforts to reduce violence, promote social and economic investment' in both communities as a whole and in individuals, whilst also seeking to challenge and change attitudes, perceptions, and policy in relation to several contentious issues (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne, and Pettis 2018: 24).

In Northern Ireland organisations engaged in peacebuilding have been in existence for almost as long as there has been conflict (Jarman 2016). Overwhelmingly these organisations focus on developing 'good relations' between Northern Ireland's two communities, an activity of peacebuilding widely

supported by the Peace Process. Good relations – originally referred to as community relations – is 'firmly ensconced within the lexicon of reconciliation to the extent that the two are virtually synonymous in many quarters in Northern Ireland' (McEvoy, McEvoy and McConnachie 2006: 84). As communal division was both a cause and resulting effect of violence, the focus on good relations originated with the outbreak of the Troubles when, in 1969, the British government established a Community Relations Commission to support the development of positive relations between Northern Ireland's two communities. Lesly McEvoy, Kieran McEvoy and Kirsten McConnachie (2006) illustrate it is important to locate the origins of, at least the formal community relations paradigm, with a political strategy that sought to enlist Catholic allegiances to a reformed and supposedly legitimate state. Thus, whilst peacebuilding may be concentrated at the civil society it remains an activity largely controlled by the state.

The community relations paradigm provided a contingency position in the void of a directed conflict management strategy, illustrating the political elite were seeking to engage with and improve relations on the ground. However, in 1974 the Community Relations Commission dissolved initiating a period marked by an absence of government policy with regards to peacebuilding. At this time, the voluntary-community sector in Northern Ireland was thriving and independently from the political elite. Community groups provided a space for the delivery of services and support that had traditionally been provided by the state but which broke down in the face of violence, or where the use of state services was no longer regarded as acceptable due to ideological and politics differences (Birrell and Williamson 2001). In the late 1980s these community groups became the focus of more official peacebuilding work and the rearticulated commitment by the political elite to build better community relations.

As societal divisions became harsher and sectarian attacks increased, the British government resurrected their commitment to community relations. In 1987 a Central Community Relations Unit (CCRU) was created, who in 1990 established the Community Relations Council as 'an independent body tasked with promoting better community relations between Protestants and Catholics in Northern Ireland and, equally, to promote recognition of cultural diversity' (McEvoy, McEvoy and McConnachie 2006: 90). In 1993 the British Government published a Strategy for the Support of the Voluntary Sector and of Community Development, which for the first time saw direct governmental endorsement for supporting and working in partnership with the third sector in Northern Ireland (see Department of Health and Social Science 1993: paras 6 and 9). Civil society was acknowledged, both within the political and academic arena, as a key site for Northern Ireland's conflict transformation (see Byrne 2001; Knox 2011a, 2011b; McCall and O'Dowd 2008; Racioppi and O'Sullivan 2007) and, thus, a legitimate space for peace-focused grant aid.

Since 1987, it is estimated that four billion dollars of peace-focussed grant aid has been invested into Northern Ireland, with most of this investment being directed towards civil society and local government actors (Kelly and Braniff 2016). The bulk of this funding has originated from outside of Northern Ireland, with the largest single programmes being sponsored through the European Union, the inter-governmental

International Fund for Ireland (IFI), and The Atlantic Philanthropies independent foundation (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018), who together have supported a range of different peacebuilding projects and activities (see table 1). Of acute significance was the establishment of the European Union's Special Support Programme for Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Ireland and in the Border Counties in the Republic of Ireland (known as PEACE). The early 1990s were marked by an increased awareness of the integral roles played by civil society actors. In turn, there was a notable desire across the European Union for civil society to be embedded in governing processes and involved in decision making. With the 1994 paramilitary ceasefire marking the beginnings of a cautious Peace Process, under the existing partnership principle the European Union took the opportunity to hold an integral role in the resolution and transformation 'of a high profile and long running conflict that was *within* the jurisdiction of a Member State' (Bush and Houston 2011: 20, original emphasis). Since 1995, the European Union's PEACE program has, and continues, to support a wide range of peacebuilding projects and programmes. By tracing the evolution of the PEACE programme and the shifts across its four iterations, we can begin to build up an image of what peacebuilding in Northern Ireland looks like.

THEMES EXPLICIT IN THE FUNDING PROGRAMME								
Funder	Geographical eligibility	Reconciliation as an explicit objective	Inter-community contact	Economic Development	Social Inclusion	Int. links	Victims	Human Rights
CCRU-OFMDFM	NI	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
DE	NI	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	NO/CRED
Victims-OFMDFM	NI	NO	NO	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
IFI pre 2006	Ireland	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
IFI post 2006	Ireland	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
EU PEACE I	NI and 6 border cos	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
EU PEACE II	NI and 6 border cos	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO
EU PEACE III	NI and 6 border cos	YES	YES	NO	YES	YES	YES	NO
Irish Government	Ireland, focus on NI and cross-border	YES	YES	NO	YES	NO	NO	NO
Atlantic Ph.	2 separate programmes for NI and RoI	YES	YES	NO	NO	NO	NO	YES

Table. 1. General themes of and approaches to peacebuilding as supported by funders before 2016 (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018: 19).

2.3.2 The PEACE Programmes: Building contact

The PEACE programme has supported a range of peacebuilding projects. It is, however, important to trace two distinct phases of the programme: the pre-2007 phase covering PEACE I and PEACE II and the post-2007 phase encompassing PEACE III and PEACE IV. PEACE I was primarily concentrated on socio-economic development, an arena of peacebuilding that all Northern Irish parties agreed upon and one broadly divorced from community relations. PEACE I ran from 1995 to 1999 and provided support to over 15,000 projects (Colgan 2012). PEACE II was initiated in 2000 and, whilst the broad management of the of the programme altered, the objectives of PEACE II predominantly mirrored PEACE I, with a continued emphasis on taking advantage of the economic and social inclusion opportunities arising with the end of violence (Skarlato et al. 2016; see figure 5). PEACE II funded over 7,000 projects and ran for six years (Colgan 2012). Whilst the first two iterations of PEACE placed little emphasis on community relations, by engaging a range of non-governmental organisations, voluntary associations and citizens both PEACE I and PEACE II acknowledged civil society as an integral arena of peacebuilding.

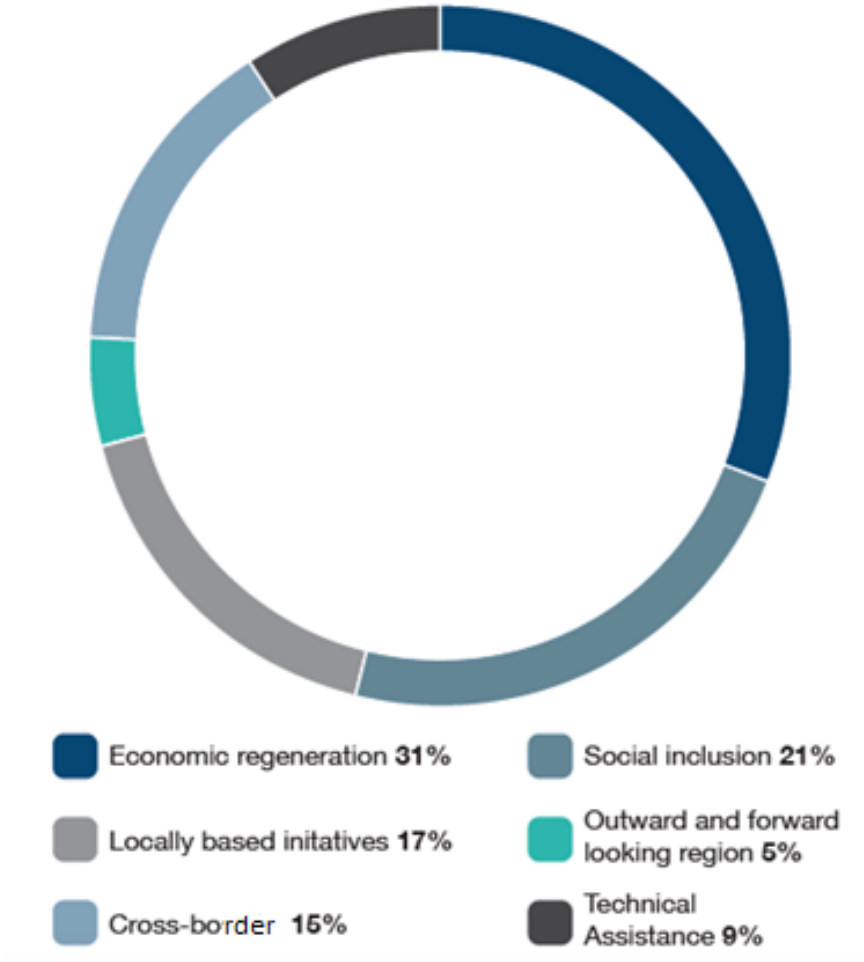

Figure. 5. Distribution of PEACE II funds, indicating the type of peacebuilding of work funded under this programme (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018: 20).

The turn of the century marked a shift in the vision of the Northern Irish Peace Process and, so, the nature of funded peacebuilding work. Following a consultation period (see CCRU 2003; Darby and Knox 2004), in 2005 the document *A Shared Future - Improving Relations in Northern Ireland: The policy and strategic framework for good relations in Northern Ireland* was launched by the CCRU and the OFMDFM. The document sought, for the first time, to provide a framework for the vision of peace being pursued in Northern Ireland. *A Shared Future* reoriented peacebuilding once again towards community relations. The document determined Northern Ireland's future to reside in the creation of a shared and pluralist society: the former, being defined as a 'society in which people are encouraged to make choices in their lives that are not bound by historical divisions and are free to do so'; while the latter is characterised by a respect and tolerance for cultural diversity which, in turn, provides the space for people to freely assert their identity (CCRU 2003, n.p.). *A Shared Future* acknowledges peace cannot be achieved by government alone. Rather communities, guided by community leaders – whose definition is inclusive of politicians – must be empowered to address the key challenges facing Northern Ireland in the 21st Century: the continuing dominance of sectarianism, the fear of renewed violence, and the building of trust and confidence within and between communities. Whilst the language of the document is hazy, ambivalent, lacking in operational definition, composed of token talk, and devoid of an effective and active strategy (Marijan 2015), the document broadly grounds Northern Ireland's shared future in the promotion of community relations and equality, which in the document are regarded as complementary.[16] With reconciliation and conflict transformation reduced almost exclusively to 'good relations' (McEvoy, McEvoy and McConnachie 2006), the engineering of intergroup contact and sharing holds central importance in the continuing Peace Process (Lepp 2018).

The tying together of cross-community contact and good relations has broadly been informed by Gordon Allport's contact hypothesis (see Beaudette and Kirkpatrick 2017; Cairns and Darby 1998; Connolly 2000; Hewstone et al. 2014; Hughes, Campbell and Jenkins 2011; McKeown and Taylor 2017; Paolini et al. 2004; Pettigrew et al. 2011). Empirically grounded in the racial segregation of 1950s America, Allport believed in the potential of social intervention for reducing prejudice and creating peaceful relationships (Dovido, Glick and Rudman 2005; Kenworthy et al. 2005). Allport (1954: 281) built upon Robin Williams's (1947) earlier work on intergroup tension, arguing that under optimal conditions intergroup contact holds the capacity to effectively decrease biases at a personal level.

[16] Community relations, through the inclusion of equality and in light of the post-modern terrain of multiple identities, were rebranded in *A Shared Future* as 'good relations'. McEvoy, McEvoy and McConnachie (2006: 94) argue the movement towards good relations could also have been a strategy to increase the distance from the critiques of the Good Friday Agreement – 'in particular, the fact that its consociational [or power-sharing] nature has essentialised those who are perceived to be within the two main communities.' Thus, in embracing the post-modern promotion of multiple identities, the political tent has been broadened as more complex notions of identity are recognised and the increasing number of ethnic groups present in Northern Ireland are acknowledged. There are a number of communities in Northern Ireland, yet, their invisibility – illustrated by the fact community relations was perceived to fail in including the third and fourth communities of Northern Ireland – simply works to assert the dominance of the Catholic and Protestant community, of the *two* communities.

> Prejudice…may be reduced by equal status contact between majority and minority groups in the pursuit of common goals. The effect is greatly enhanced if this contact is sanctioned by institutional supports (i.e., by law, custom, or local atmosphere), and provided it is of the sort that leads to the perception of common interests and common humanity between members of the two groups.

Although not without critiques (see Dixon, Durrheim and Tredoux 2005), the contact hypothesis has been highly influential in war-torn and post-conflict societies. In the face of continuing segregation and ongoing cultural contestation, the influence and popularity of the contact hypothesis – amongst both Northern Ireland's political elite and its academic community – has been particularly acute (see Byrne et al. 2009; Hayes, McAllister and Dowds 2007; Hewstone et al. 2006; Hughes 2003; Loader and Hughes 2017; Paolini et al. 2014; Porter 2000; Turner and Cameron 2016).[17] Contact has been promoted as a means for reducing anxiety and perceived threat, cultivating empathy and trust, and increasing a sense of commonality and humanity across divides (Kenworthy et al. 2005): it is the basis for establishing good relations. Engineering cross-community contact, then, has become the foundation of peacebuilding work.

The vision promoted within *A Shared Future* came to directly influence peacebuilding work or, at the very least, where funding for peacebuilding work was channelled, as exemplified by the shift in focus from PEACE II to PEACE III. PEACE III (2007-2013) was the first programme to run alongside a devolved government. With the two traditionally opposing parties working together in a shared government, the image projected towards the rest of the world suggested peace had been achieved. The British and Irish governments both endorsed this narrative, directly illustrating their strong support for the new Executive and devolved the responsibility of peacebuilding (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018). With a relatively stable and successfully functioning political structure, emphasis soon became placed upon the relationship between the two communities, with the remit of peacebuilding largely concentrated on dealing with the sectarian divisions that continued to plague society (Power 2011).

In 2010, the power-sharing Executive published the *Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* (OFDFM 2010). Despite the Executive disbanding *A Shared Future* (Knox 2011a), the vision they brought forth aligns to the trajectory of the former. The post-2007 PEACE programmes, then, not only reflect the post-2007 shift from peace-making to peacebuilding, but also the continuation of the vision of peace first presented in *A Shared Future*. Good relations and equality take centre stage in the *Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* and, for the first time, they are explicitly grounded in space. The document acknowledges the continuing presence of fear in relation to moving through, what can be perceived as, intimidating space. Thus, there is a greater focus on the promotion of shared and safe

[17] Cross-community or intergroup contact has been widely studied and supported throughout Northern Ireland's academic community. To date, this research has overwhelmingly been concentrated within the social psychology field (see Kenworth et al. 2016; Leonard, Yung, and Cairns 2015; McKeown and Psaltis 2017; Voci et al. 2015; White et al. 2019), with the consequence the research has been overwhelmingly discursive, quantitatively comparing attitudes before and after contact to objectively determine if contact improves intergroup relations. Furthermore, this work tends to focus on intergroup education and youth community groups, contact between ex-prisoners and contact between 'perpetrators' and 'victims', to the exclusion of the everyday body living the legacy of contact (notable exceptions include Lepp 2018; Mac Ginty 2014; Smyth and McKnight 2013).

spaces of everyday life, and shared high-quality service provisions that are welcoming and accessible to all. Whilst the language largely mirrors *A Shared Future* (O'Kane 2013), the document places great emphasis on the younger generation.

Unlike its first two iterations, PEACE III and PEACE IV ran alongside a determined political vision of Northern Irish peace. Unsurprisingly, then, the *Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration* directly impacted upon the types of peacebuilding activities receiving funding. Whilst PEACE I and PEACE II were heavily focused on economic development and social inclusion, the priorities of PEACE III were recalibrated towards reconciliation and inter-community and cross-border activity (Skarlato et al. 2016). Running from 2007 to 2013 PEACE III had two broad strands: the first, reconciling communities, aimed to challenge sectarian and racist attitudes and to support conflict resolution and mediation in the local community; and the second, contributing to a shared society, was focused on regeneration, the creation of shared space, and working with key institutions to develop their capacity to deliver services in a manner corresponding and contributing to a shared Northern Irish society and on a cross-border basis (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018).

On the 23rd March 2013, the Northern Irish Executive published *Together: Building a United Community (TBUC)*. TBUC set forth the vision of:

> ...a united community, based on equality of opportunity, the desirability of good relations and reconciliation – one which is strengthened by its diversity, where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced and where everyone can live, learn, work and socialise together, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance (OFMDFM 2013: 3).

TBUC determined peace to reside in a stable government, claiming the achievement of political stability opens the path for Northern Ireland 'to shape the kind of society that we all want to see, one which ensures that our past is never repeated, and which lays the foundation for peace and prosperity for future generations' (OFMDFM 2013: 1). The official, government-controlled Peace Process overwhelmingly promotes peace as political achievement that will "trickle down" from the top, executive level to local communities and the everyday (Marijan 2015).

The OFDFM (2013: 25) articulated four key priorities of peace in the TBUC strategy.

1. Children and young people: to continue to improve attitudes amongst our young people and to build a community where they can play a full and active role in building good relations;
2. A shared community: to create a community where division does not restrict the life opportunities of individuals and where all areas are open and accessible to everyone;
3. A safe community: to create a community where everyone feels safe in moving around and where life choices are not inhibited by fears around safety;
4. Cultural expression: to create a community which promotes mutual respect and understanding, is strengthened by its diversity, and where cultural expression is celebrated and embraced.

Within each of the four key priorities a 'shared aim' is set out, alongside a set of tangible and practical headline actions, and a series of commitments to make the vision a sustainable, long-term reality. In addition, a range of measures are set forth to aid implementation, to enhance policy advice, to improve funding delivery, to increase local council delivery, and to implement monitoring and evaluation. The Draft Programme for Government Framework 2016-2021, which emphasised the need to promote respect between Northern Irelands two main communities and strengthen diversity, reinforced the TBUC strategy (Knox and McCrory 2018), stating:

> Together: Building a United Community has established a strong foundation for this work [for making space for a greater sharing between traditionally divided communities]. By continuing to work with communities, we can continue to develop shared spaces in education, in housing, and in society in general (Northern Ireland Executive 2016: 33)

TBUC continues today as the policy framework peacebuilding is responsive to, as is evident for the PEACE IV programme.

There are two important shifts in the TBUC strategy to be noted. Firstly, the framework places a much greater emphasis on action: 'we recognise that it is now the time to move from policy development to implementation and action' (OFMDFM 2013: 1). The Executive's direct commitment to action is illustrated in the documents format, which diverges from the previous two programmes for peace. The four key priorities of the document are accompanied by a series of headline actions and commitments, whilst also drawing upon grassroots case studies as examples of good practice. Secondly, the document grounds the creation of good relations in activities extending beyond dialogue. The fostering of good relations has been promoted as key to the 'cultural expression' priority. TBUC promotes cross-community contact as a means for addressing the cultural wars in Northern Ireland. Whilst cross-community contact is not novel, there was a shift in the location of such contact, with TBUC suggesting cultural itself could be used to address continuing cultural contestation; the focus of cross-community work has come to reside in engineering cross-cultural contact. Thus, the strategy placed emphasis on the capacity of sports (see Bairner 2001; Beutler 2008; Cárdenas 2013, 2016; Hassan and Telford 2014; Mitchell, Somerville and Hargie 2016; Sugden and Sugden 1997; Tuohey, and Cognato 2011; United Nations 2005) and the arts (see Bergh and Sloboda 2010; Cohen 2005; Shank and Schirch 2008; Walsh 2013; Yalen and Cohen 2007) as integral locations for contact, sharing, and good relations.

As TBUC followed the trajectory first set out in *A Shared Future*, PEACE IV closely resembles PEACE III. TBUC and PEACE IV are closely aligned (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018), with the European Commission's (2016: 5) stating how TBUC provides 'a strong Northern Ireland policy context for the development of the PEACE IV programme.' Running from 2014 to 2020, PEACE IV has four core objectives: funding shared education initiatives, supporting marginalised children and young people, providing new shared spaces and services, and endorsing projects aiming to build positive relations between people from different communities and backgrounds (SEUPB 2016).

The TBUC strategy makes an explicit attempt to acknowledge the grassroots experience and expertise in relation to peacebuilding and there has been a movement towards working from the bottom up. Yet, peacebuilding in Northern Ireland remains entangled with the same, ambiguous language of sharing, reconciliation, cohesion, conflict resolution, relationship-building, good relations, inter-community contact, and equality. With policy documents and the criteria and procedures of external funding support merging almost beyond distinction, the supposedly grassroots nature of the voluntary and community sector has been challenged, as peacebuilding organisations are forced to align to the vision of the international and national funding bodies they are responsive to (Cochrane and Dunn 2002; Skarlato et al. 2016). Through the political frameworks and the European Union's PEACE Programme, peacebuilding has been institutionalised as a political goal (Lepp 2018), with a singular, set format that restricts the transformative potential of peacebuilding work which is, in turn, compounded by increasing financial concerns.

Just as devolution was finding its feet, in 2008 the international financial crisis broke, seriously impacting both the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland. In the wake of political stability and financial crisis, international donors have dramatically reduced their investments into the Northern Irish Peace Process (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018). Whilst PEACE I saw €667 million invested (Bush and Houston 2011) and PEACE II €995 (Buchanan 2008), the investment for PEACE III totalled €333 million (Colgan 2012) and PEACE IV €270 million (SEUPB 2016). What is more, since 2007 the distribution of European Union's funding has altered and, today, public sector bodies have an enhanced distribution role. Domestic support has remained steady but incapable of offsetting the continual decrease of international funding. Thus, while more and more voluntary and community organisations are involved in peacebuilding work and to a greater depth, the funding environment for such work has become increasingly difficult to navigate (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018) and the sustainability of peacebuilding projects, alongside a query over their transformative potential, has been questioned (Skarlato et al. 2016).

Interruption: The Noisy Silence of the 12th

Silence. The bright flames from the night before still dance before eyes. Ears are still filled with an engulfing, dense smoke.

Silence. The roads are empty. An eerie stillness, amplifying the rustle of leaves and the pound of my footsteps.

Silence. The echo "we're never here, I have never been in Northern Ireland for the 12th[18] ***ever...*** *" reverberate through the air.*

Silence. An unsettling and unnerving discomfort stirs in the internal depths. An immersion in anticipation and apprehension.

Silence. The road abandoned. The students vanished. The bus stops empty. Even the seagulls have fled to Donegal.

Slowly a feint sound begins to fill the air. The booming rumble of a bass drum. University Road continues to pass under moving feet. A higher, more melodic sound gently touches my ear. An unusually feeling. A strange sound.

The route veers right.

Orange fills the eye. Sequins covered orange hats glisten in the warm July summer. Orange sashes hang proudly on strong, broad shoulders. The sky is filled with a haze of orange glowing from the tall orange banners (see figure 6).

Music fills the air. The high whistle of the flute. The beat and strength of the drums swelling, resounding again the eardrum. DUUUUM...DUMDUM...DUUUM. Feet march in time, arms rigidly and methodically move back and forth, conducting the song. Children twirling batons high in the air, enjoying the attention of the gazing crowd. Families march together; men honoured to be wearing the uniform of their band, women and children draped in their Sunday best.

[18] The 12th July is one of the bigger days in the calendar for the Protestant, Unionist, Loyalist community. The celebration dates back to the eighteenth century and celebrates the victory of King William of Orange over Catholic King James II at the Battle of Boyne; an event that initiated Protestant and British ascendency in Northern Ireland. To commemorate the victory, large parades are held by the Orange Order where Loyalist bands march across Northern Ireland. The parade in Belfast is the longest, beginning in the city centre at Royal Avenue and walks out to the field at Barnett's Demesne. Violence is often triggered by the 12th July parades (Hurley 2001; McDowell, Braniff and Murphy 2015; The Guardian 2018). Consequently, large sections of the Catholic community leave Northern Ireland and head to Donegal to avoid the 12th and the possibly resulting violence.

Fun, laughter. Carefree. Drinks flow. Cool boxes stand open and sandwiches are passed around; hungrily consumed by children, grandparent, aunts, cousins, friends, and strangers alike. Groups dance. Arms move up and down to the beat, while smiles stretch across faces. Feet tap and bodies sway. A beer can in hand. Warm hugs and kisses move between old friends and family. A ripple of excitement travels through the crowds, their attention caught by a favourite tune. Singing breaks out: a communal choir who have the words etched within their being. A man yo-yos from one side to the other, his hips gently sway, his eyes closed, and his right hand clutched to his heart. His melodic, impassioned signing provides the accompanying words. Union Jacks wave from side to side. One big street party.

I turn on one foot and walk back along University Road.

Dead silence returns.

Based on Research Journal, July 12th 2017

Figure. 6. Images from the 11th night when bonfires light up the Belfast night sky and from the 12th July parades through Belfast (author's own, 11th and 12th July 2017).

Setting the Scene: Tracing peaceful possibilities

In my seminars, I asked students from all over the world to research the etymological root of the word for peace in their corresponding mother tongues, and I still remember one class's bewilderment when a student from Burkina Faso said that the word for peace in his mother tongue meant nothing else but "fresh air."…astonishment about "fresh air" was followed by enthusiasm about the beauty of the word: Can there be a better way to experience peace than breathing fresh air? Is breathing in itself not the most fundamental and indispensable act of all beings, for themselves and yet in necessary relation to each other, and thus the most alive measurement for peaces as such?...Do we not release something from our deepest inside, something very intimate and authentic, into the environment each time we breathe out? Do particles of our breath not re-enter the lungs and bodies of other beings so that we could say that all that is alive is more intimately connected through breathing than through any other activity? Is breathing not the elementary sign of life, in many languages synonymous with soul, and therefore is fresh air not the best possible description of a peaceful existence?

(Dietrich 2012: 3)

3.1 Introduction

Breath is a force of creativity. Breath floods our body and expands out into the world. The inhalation and exhalation with which life, bodies, and worlds blossom. A liveliness composing and penetrating worlds with dynamism and vitality. Breath can be still but never static, a living rhythm and beat continuing in both rest and movement. It is excessive (Irigaray 2002a). A movement that can never be contained and confined. Breath denies boundaries and diffuses partitions. An embodied, invisible air swirling, spiralling and resting in the spaces in-between. Breath animates connections and relations (Škof 2015); it moves in-between here and there, you and I, culture and nature to permit sharing (Irigaray 1994). The elemental fluidity and openness of breath gives birth to relations to oneself and to the other that are always a situated, emerging, and slippery grouping of relational movement in the present (Faulkner 2001).

Breath is reciprocity flowing in all directions. An unseen quietness touching flesh as the outside is brought in and the inside moves out. It is an activity and passivity which gifts a responsiveness, an attentiveness, an awareness and a letting-be – voices, stories, silences, and listening travel across it. Breath is the birth of openness, the creation and filling of time and space. It is the movement of becoming, a 'nextness' continually giving and caring without measure. Breath is the fresh air of peace. Breath, however, has largely been forgotten as a modality of critical reflection and as a vector for attending to creativity; a forgetting within which the failure of peace can be located.

Although breath has been forgotten, by its very nature breath cannot be contained. Breath will always escape, and it will always return. Even when forgotten or neglected there will always be a flutter of

movement. Even when world, bodies, and relations are held in a void of stasis and an invisible violence continues to be active in the telling of inherited truths, there is always the potential for peace. We cannot give up on this potential, reduce it to the less-than or non-violent, nor consign it to a naïve and utopian ideal. We must move with the glimmers of peace that are always-already present; we must move with the embodied respiration of fresh air.

Before tracing breath, it is necessary to illustrate why this tracing is needed. I make this case by, first, tracing geography's engagement with the subject of peace. Geography has become increasingly committed to the question of peace, a commitment which has largely failed. Following Harry Bregazzi and Mark Jackson (2018), I argue this failure lies with placing violence in an originary position with the consequence peace is always-already restricted to the non-violent. Committing to peace-as-peace necessitates the creation of an alternative horizon; geographers need to breathe fresh air into peace. Peace, not violence, must be our focus, and breath provides a potential avenue for cultivating this focus. The next section traces breath through Luce Irigaray's philosophical work, with the principal aim of describing how I mobilise breath and to illustrate how breath can animate an alternative horizon wherein peace is an extant potential. Finally, I situate encounters taking place in a sharing of breath as a possible space for creating a peaceful horizon.

3.2 A Failed Horizon: Tracing everyday peaces

Peace is not an end point to be achieved. It is not a final state instituted for in law and by political, elite authority via peace agreements and accords. Peace is *more-than* the absence of violence. A commitment to peace-as-peace, which geographer Nick Megoran (2011) calls for, necessitates a movement beyond negative accounts positing war and peace within a binary horizon. The distinction between positive and negative peace is commonly attributed to Johan Galtung (1964, 1985).[19] Galtung determines positive peace to reside in the integration of human society through the principles of harmony, cooperation, and integration. Galtung's positive peace closely aligns to the liberal peace model, which locates peace at an institutional level as the activity of political elites. This focus neglects what is going on beyond, or below, official documentation (Williams and McConnell 2011). The everyday Northern Irish body, then, becomes excluded behind – negative or positive – accounts of peace concerned with the distant achievement of peace as engineered by the Good Friday Agreement, and with the continued effort for peace in Northern Ireland's power-sharing government. Positive conceptualisations of peace cannot merely be concerned within peace accords and the actions of political elite; it must also attend to contingent everyday makings of peace.

[19] In 1963, a year before Galtung mobilised the distinction between positive and negative peace, Martin Luther King (2018: 13) spoke of how the white moderate 'prefers a negative peace which is the absence of tension to a positive peace which is the presence of justice.' It is this distinction Galtung's work explores.

Geography today mobilises peace as an ongoing, contingent, and fragile process (Darling 2014) of shared social relations and practices that are both exceptional *and* everyday (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018; Williams, Megoran, and McConnell 2014). Whilst this is a relatively 'new' way of conceiving peace within geography, Jane Addams advanced a positive, everyday conceptualisation of peace in the early twentieth century. In dialogue with a wave of early feminist articulations protesting war and the sustained female exclusion from public life and policy discussion (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018), Addams conceived of an 'everyday ontology of peace' (Shields and Soeters 2017: 327) that was processual, practical, positive, and firmly grounded in everyday relations. War in the early twentieth century was believed to be a noble act 'necessary to engender and cherish patriotism', yet Addams (2007: 14) determined that 'below their [mans] shouting, they were living in the kingdom of human kindness.' Engaged with practical work addressing the welfare of low income and immigrant populations in inner city Chicago (see Addams 2015), Addams voiced the immediate and intimate relationships of care and attention always-already active in the everyday kingdom of human kindness. These innate gestures animate what – via Addams – Patricia Shields and Joseph Soeters (2017: 324) name 'peaceweaving'; the pulling together of the many noble fibres of the everyday body 'into [positive] action' (Addams 2002a: 176). It is within this active, feminist conceptualisation that I situate my work.

Geographers have recently become attentive to calls for a positive commitment to peace located at an everyday level. Within geography and, more broadly, peace is now widely regarded as a 'doing' grounded in the everyday socio-spatial context, and animated in mutually enabling relations and embodiments within a sensual and affective micro-politics (Addams 2007; Bregazzi and Jackson 2018; Daley 2014; Darling 2014; Koopman 2011; Williams 2014; Williams and McConnell 2011; Williams, Megoran and McConnell 2014). Peace, here, is not mobilised through universalising, external abstractions approaching the everyday body as either a passive victim or a passive recipient (Mac Ginty 2014) but within a grounded contextual definition, wherein 'peace(s) are always shaped in and through the spaces and times through which they are made' and, crucially, made again (Koopman 2011: 194). Attention has been rerouted from political elites, and their democratic deals and accords, towards everyday spaces actively doing peace in a subtly normalcy. Everyday peace can be brief, fleeting, and transient or the sustained activity of an official event or organised programme (Marajan 2015). It can occur in spaces formally designated as peaceful or in banal spaces and everyday moments, where peace-weaving may be more unconscious than conscious (Williams and McConnell 2011). A commitment to the everyday does not construct a false binary between the nation-state and the local. Rather, it shifts attention to the micro and the everyday, whilst continuing to recognise the local and national are always intertwined (Bjorkdahl and Mannergren Selimovic 2016).

With the recognition peace is a process woven in the everyday, as well as at a political elite level, there have been calls – both in geography and beyond – to engage with more expansive and dynamic conceptualisations of peace and with transformative practices of micropolitical peace-weaving (Gleditch, Nordkvelle and Strand 2014; Inwood and Tyner 2011; Megoran 2011; Williams and

McConnell 2011; Williams, Megoran and McConnell 2014). Several geographers have responded to this call (see Brickell 2015; P. Daley 2014; Darling 2014; Courtheyn 2016, 2018; Koopman 2014; Laliberte 2016; Lepp 2018; Loyd 2012; Megoran 2010; Schoenfeld et al. 2014; Woon 2014, 2015; Williams 2013, 2014). Yet, to date, geographies of peace have largely failed and 'positive peace' remains a vague and untheorised concept (Courtheyn 2018; Koopman 2011; Loyd 2012). Failure lies with the dominant theoretical engagement – both ontologically and epistemologically – through which peace and its everyday materialities are approached.

The geography of peace literature is primarily rooted in critical geography and critical geopolitics. Bregazzi and Jackson's (2018) examination of the influential, post-structural thinking of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida, reveals how these sub-disciplines are highly reliant on theoretical positions grounded in social agonism. To start from agonism, as Bregazzi and Jackson (2018) argue, precludes the possibility of peace from the outset. Agonism reads sociality and, critically, the constitutive effect of difference as necessarily and irreducibly conflictual, divisive, and violent. Discussing identity formation and the outplaying of identity politics in his book *The Lies That Bind*, Kwame Anthony Appiah (2018) maps the workings of social norms by which differences are publicly addressed. Norms of politeness censor negative commentaries of difference. Appiah (2018: 94) labels these norms a 'potent prohibition', commenting 'after all, given our clannishness, commentary on differences always carries some risk of creating ill.' Although theoretically removed from agonism, Appiah's commentary illustrates how meshing difference and clannishness into a singular trajectory works not only to group bodies into essentialised mass tribes but to, also, set up difference as a violent dualism. The oppositional, hierarchical structure of difference produces collective clannish sentiments whereby 'we prefer our own kind and we're easily persuaded to [violently] take against [inferior] outsiders' (Appiah 2018: 31). Sociality, then, is founded upon a narrative of confrontational differences grouped and divided through bounded, hierarchical categories of us and them; it is founded upon the standardised and inherited 'truths that bind us'. Critical geography and critical geopolitics approach binding truths of difference, and the binary sociality they operate to construct, as necessarily agonistic and violent.

An intrinsically agonistic social horizon limits critical scholarship to the 'persistent potentials for conflict' (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018: 72). The political task of agonism lies in critique, wherein there is a continual struggle to unveil the underlying presence of violence. Even when peace is the objective, there is always an original and necessary space reserved for conflict (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018). Adam Ramadan (2011: 195), whose thinking draws from experiences grounded in the tensions of Lebanon and Palestine, argues our explorations of peace must never lose sight of the 'dominant relations and practices of power' continuing to inflict spaces of love and nonviolence and, ultimately, 'prevent peace.' Thinking rooted in agonism approaches peace, first theoretically and then empirically, with caution as practices of love, trust, compassion, kindness, friendship, and care are always-already embedded within power relations and forms of violence (Williams, Megoran and McConnel 2014). As a theoretical possibility peace and its constitutive grounds are lost, deferred as 'Messianic, unachievable, aporetic, an impossible perfection'

(Bregazzi and Jackson 2018: 74). Agonism approaches peace as a utopian impossibility masking ongoing and originary operations of power, exclusion, inequality, and domination. Unable to breathe autonomously from violence, critical geographies of peace are a continual preoccupation with the geography of war or, at best, a geography of the less-than-violent (Darling 2014), of the non-violent (Woon 2014), or of an imperfect peace (Munõz 2011 in Courtheyn 2018). The 'peace' in the geography of peace has been lost in a movement of incessant deferral.

A critical practice of unveiling violence cannot animate peace. Irigaray (1993a) argues to remain within criticism is to stifle any capacity for change, creativity, and invention. A political task of criticism confines society, and both its culture and politics, to a process of fatal repetition. The stasis of repetition reduces peace to an empty rhetoric rather than a felt and living reality; worlds, relations, and bodies are held in the haunting stasis of violence. Change and transformation necessitate a movement beyond critique. This movement can be grounded within a feminist politics.

Feminist politics seeks not the deconstruction of the given (Puig de la Bellacasa 2012), but the passionate creation and cultivation of alternatives (see Dowler and Sharp 2001; Gibson-Graham 2006a; Haraway 1997; Koopman 2011; Sharp 2011; Povinelli 2011). This is not to deny the importance of critique and the meaningful task of revealing the latent and invisible violence inflicting many facets of sociality. Nor does it dismiss how war and peace can be in paradoxical relation. It does, however, stress how positive understandings of peace and peaceful practice remain unrecognised, or untheorised, from within an agonistic horizon organised around domination, control, power, and exclusion. Opposed to restricting peace to the less-than-violent or non-violent, we need to engage with a peace existing alongside, but breathing autonomously from, violence and conflict. Agonism has exposed the war in peace (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018). Yet, as Koopman (2011: 193) writes, 'peace too is inside war.' Extant moments and space of peace will only become a theoretical and practical possibility when emphasis is rerouted from continual, incessant criticism to a pre-figurative political task of creation, invention, and change, wherein conditions of possibility open onto unknown and uncertain but potentially peaceful futures (Gibson-Graham 2006a).

3.3 Thinking a New Horizon: Tracing breath in Irigaray's thinking

Luce Irigaray's ontology is concerned with the invention of new, alternative worlds. Irigaray's philosophical and practical project primarily coalesces around sexuate difference,[20] and building worlds moving with the becoming of the sexuate, largely human, body; the invention of worlds and bodies 'belonging to a sexed nature to which it is proper to be faithful' (Irigaray 1996: 11). Thirty years ago,

[20] Irigaray's earliest work used the term 'sexual difference' opposed to 'sexuate difference' and, thus, both appear in this thesis. Irigaray (2008b: 142) explains: 'I use the term "sexuate", rather than "sexual", in order to avoid the all too frequent confusion between sexuate identity and sexual choice. Sexuate difference is more basic…', it is ontological.

Irigaray (1993a: 5) announced 'sexual difference is one of the major philosophical issues, if not the issue, of our age.' However, the Western world has long silenced sexuate difference.

> But, whether I turn to philosophy, to science, or to religion, I find this underlying issue still cries out in vain for our attention… Both in theory and in practice everything resists the discovery and affirmation of such an advent or event. In theory, philosophy wants to be literature or rhetoric, wishing either to break with ontology or to regress to the ontological. Using the same ground and the same framework as 'first philosophy,' working toward its disintegration but without proposing any other goals that might assure new foundations and new works (Irigaray 1993a: 5-6).

Sexuate difference has been neglected and unthought-of in the Western world. Yet, sexuate difference is an undeniable and natural reality. It is the first difference and, what is more, the elaboration of all other differences.

Irigaray (2004a: xiv) asserts ontological difference must begin 'with the most basic and universal, the one which first articulated nature and culture' – sexuate difference.[21] The first difference is not the most intense difference,[22] for this presupposes the impossible qualification between differences. Sexuate difference, as Grosz (2011: 104, original emphasis) illustrates, is ontological difference:

> Sexual difference…is the condition for the emergence of all other differences, even if these other differences (phenotypic or morphological) are not ultimately reducible to sexual differences. And this is the case, for Irigaray, because sexual differences have an ontological status, or rather, perhaps more interestingly, because ontology itself has always been sexualized…sexual difference *is* ontological difference.

Sexuate difference resides within a universal, horizontal horizon. Whilst differences such as, for example, race, nationality, gender, religion, are not ultimately reducible to sexuate difference, all differences reside within the horizon of sexuate difference. The work of sexuate difference does not simply seek to politicise the other but to recast the political (Chanter 1995): 'to challenge conceptual systems which refuse to acknowledge their own limitations and their own specific interests…[a challenge to] and undermining of the modes of representation, models and systems which represent, theorise and analyse the world and which help to produce them as such' (Grosz 2005: 175). It is a reformulation of the real in which everything concerning 'the relations between the subject and discourse, the subject and the world, the subject and the cosmic, the microcosmic and the macrocosmic' is reconfigured towards its transformation (Irigaray 1993a: 6). Sexuate difference is the recasting of contemporary political frameworks to actualise the becoming of all differences.

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[21] There are many readers of Irigaray – most prominently Drucilla Cornell, Penelope Deutscher, and Judith Butler (see Butler and Cornell 1998; Deutscher 2002, 2003) – who criticises her conceptualisation of the woman, of the feminine, and of sexuate difference for not accommodating the other categories, especially race and ethnicity, by which the body is identified or for reducing these categories to an expression of sexuate difference. These criticisms tend to be particular acute in the later aspects of Irigaray's thinking.

[22] As articulated by Grosz (2011, p. 107), who agrees sexuate difference is the universal, ontological condition of earthly life rather than a performatively produced artifact as Butler claims in her work: 'Irigaray never claimed that in addressing other forms of oppression we should consider sexual difference the most important, only that we should consider our oppression where it affect each of us most directly, where is touches each of us in our specificity.'

Irigaray (1993a: 6) illustrates there are strategies and interventions to animate the revolution necessary for 'the work of sexuate difference to take place.' Creation and invention animate a revolution in thought, in epistemology, in ethics, and in politics. This revolution will be the making of alternative worlds that are not simply the birth of symbolic social change but the becoming of new 'foundational structures that govern existence' (Roberts 2014: 11). The question of sexuate difference is a question of ontology, and to recognise and mobilise sexuate difference as ontological is imperative for 'the creation of a new *poetics*' (Irigaray 1993a: 5, original emphasis). Irigaray locates the body not in language, as has been the habit of Western tradition, but in air (Irigaray 2000b). She (1993a: 127) argues the first home of the body is 'the air we breathe, in which we live, speak, appear; the air in which everything 'enters into presence' and can come into being.' The materiality of bodies is elemental, aerial. A sexuate ontology poses a question of the ethics and politics of existence, of life, of living, of vitality; it is a question of breath – the very embodiment of air.

Breath is a potential strategy by which the revolution of sexuate difference – and I would argue the animation of peace – can be realised. Irigaray's philosophy, first and foremost, is inventive. It is an opening to creativity and becoming, an extant movement whose advent resides in future worlds: a future not characterised by violence, partition, and stasis but an ecological future in which the potential for sharing, for peace, and for becoming is animated. Irigaray's philosophy has been a practice in learning, or more precisely re-learning, to breathe. Breath is the elemental movement of both the growth of thinking and the blossoming of materiality. It is in thinking-*with* the movement of breath that a new ontology is born, and it is by cultivating a practice of breathing that bodies and worlds are born into a continual and relational movement of blossoming. Irigaray (2004a) describes the future as the 'age of breath'. I locate the possibility of peace in this future age of breath.

Breath holds a primary position in Irigaray's philosophy. It spans the breadth of her work and is present across the three aspects of her thinking. The initial aspect of Irigaray's work is the most critical while the later aspects are more inventive, focused on creating new possibilities for the becoming of sexuate difference. Yet, it is important to note the entangled nature of these two strands. Irigaray (2008b: 124) herself explains the three aspects to her work:

> I would rather say that the first part of my work amounts to a criticism of the Western tradition as constructed by a single subjectivity, a masculine subjectivity, who has elaborated a logic and a world according to his own necessities. In the second part, I try to indicate mediations which permit a feminine subjectivity to emerge from the unique and so called neutral Western culture, and to affirm herself as autonomous and capable of a cultivation and a culture of her own. The third part of my work is devoted to defining and rendering practicable the ways through which masculine subjectivity and feminine subjectivity could coexist, enter into relation without submitting or subjecting the one to the other, and construct a world shareable by the two with respect for their own worlds. Of course, these three stages or aspects of my thinking intertwine and interact.

Through the different aspects of Irigaray's work, breath has gained an increasingly important and foundational presence (Ŝkof 2015). Whilst I situate my engagement within the third aspect – an understanding of how the self and the other could enter into relations of breath devoid of violent elimination and create a sharing of worlds – these phases cannot be taken discreetly, they influence each other, and are rearticulated in one and other. Thus, to attend to breath is to begin to trace the trajectory of Irigaray's thinking in its intertwinement and interaction.

3.3.1 Aspect One: The forgetting of air

Irigaray's first aspect illustrates the forgetting of breath in the Western world (Byrne 2013, Irigaray 2002a, Still 2012).[23] The forgetting of breath accounts for the world as it currently stands: a world that recognises only one type of subject – the masculine subject. This is the central claim of Irigaray's work, which reverberates and inspires the breadth of her thinking. The first aspect of Irigaray's work is a critique of the Western world, aiming to bring to light the stasis of sameness engineered through the recognition of the one: the reduction to a hierarchical horizon of sameness through the narcissistic work of projective identification that fails to engage in the practice of breathing.

The symbolic representation and cultural outplay of projective identification structures Western metaphysics upon hierarchical dualisms: masculine or feminine, mind or body, sensible or transcendental, natural or cultural, living or logical, us or them. Rather than reconciling the good and bad within one body and coming to terms that this body belongs to the self, projective identification takes an easier route and constructs a split between good experience and bad experience, between the good body and the bad body. Once split, the good is introjected towards the self, whilst the bad is projected towards the external other (Whitford 2007). The essential origin and identity projected onto the other is based on what this body is predetermined to lack or what has already been marked as foreign, in relation to positive characteristics and attributes projected onto the self (Daley 2014). Western culture typically thinks of man and women, culture or nature, us or them 'as one thing and its opposite,' preventing the latter from being anything but a deficient, faulty version of the former (Khader 2011: 3). The self becomes dependent upon the other, as it is only in knowing who we are not that we can know who we are; the mass collective of 'us' is only the same in an opposing relation of distinction to 'their' collective community.[24]

The community of 'us' and the community of 'them' exists in a relation of comparative difference – two fixed entities for which there exists no middle position, a necessary empty space between 'our' essential

[23] Irigaray's earliest work makes little reference to breath. It was only with the publication of *The Forgetting of Air in Martin Heidegger* in 1983 (translated into English in 1999) this more critical phase was reframed as a forgetting of breath. Thus, this aspect aligns to her earlier thinking but was not articulated as such till later in time, which accounts for the temporal disjuncture in dates as your move along the three aspects of Irigaray's thinking.

[24] Although not traditionally arrived at through the working of projective identification, identity politics and, thus, difference are broadly considered to work through an opposing, conflictual us-them discourse (see Appiah 2018; Hall 1991; Tajfel 1982; Turner 1987; Ullah 1990).

essence and 'their' essential essence (Grosz 2011; Hill 2012). Projective telling not only assigns the other an inferior identity but negates this pre-constructed essentialised identity by making the other our own (Irigaray 2002a). The consequence is that it is self and never the other who is spoken (Barad 2014). The other's capacity to strive in their own becoming is annihilated as the (feminine) body is pulled out from itself: 'from the very beginning she starts to measure herself against masculine performances...she identifies herself...with half of humanity and above that not her own half' (Irigaray 1999b: 10). Impossible to become man, the female body is always-already recognised as aligning to a subordinate fixed position within the dominant (masculine) social order inaccessible to the female as an autonomous feminine subject. Irigaray (1985a: 224) voices the position of the female as 'the still undifferentiated opaqueness of sensible matter, the store (of) substance for the sublation of self.' The very presence of the feminine other is eliminated, their breath appropriated, in a gesture of (external) incorporation that reduces difference to a stable and permanent sameness. As Irigaray (1993a: 108) writes 'she has barely been allowed a little air, a crack in the rock to permit breath.'

Binary logic institutionalises a forgetting of breath that extends beyond the female body. Irigaray suggests the denial of sexuate difference partly stems from the man's difficulty with his natural belonging. Peng Cheah and Elizabeth Grosz (1998b: 7) illustrate how, according to Irigaray, the patriarchal 'repression of sexuate difference is historically coextensive with the human subject's disavowal of his indebtedness to nature and his loss of respect for the nature in himself.' In consigning the other to a lesser, faulty position, the masculine subject imposes limits upon his own body through an exclusion or forgetting of, amongst other things, corporeality, embodiment, nature, and maternal relations (Faulkner 2001): 'he would prefer nevertheless to dwell in death rather than to emerge into the free air, in this outside where he dwells alone and where absence takes place' (Irigaray 2001: 313). The forgetting of breath and the split of the natural and the cultural reduces bodies and worlds to a singular Being (ontological) and being (ontic). What is forgotten is that 'man and women are from the very beginning not only two different being but also two different Beings' (Irigaray 2008b: 133) – a being-two that is at once ethical, political, and ontological yet always material, corporeal, fluid, embodied, and generative.

3.3.2 The Second Aspect: Breathing between mother and daughter

The second aspect of Irigaray's work seeks to create the emergence, both philosophically and practically, of an autonomous feminine subjectivity.[25] Rachel Jones (2011: 160) succinctly articulates the breadth of Irigaray's aim:

[25] Irigaray has been criticised for essentialism which, following Diana Fuss (1989: xii), can be understood as 'a belief in the real, true essence of things, the invariable and fixed properties which define the 'whatness' of a given entity.' Mary Poovey's (cited in Chanter 1995: 4, other notable critics are Monique Plaza, Lynne Segal and Toril Moi), for example, critiques: 'Irigaray....authorizes th[e] return to biology and essentialism in her creation of a myth of female desire and in basing 'feminine' language on the physical properties of female genitalia.' In contrast, Fuss (1989: 72) argues: 'Irigaray works towards securing a woman's access to an essence of her own, without actually prescribing what that essence might be, or without precluding the possibility that a subject might possess multiple essences which may even contradict or compete with one another.' Tina Chanter (1995: 44) explores the essentialism critique yielded against Irigaray's work (see also Martin 2000; Poe 2011; Schor 1989, 1994; Whitford 1989),

> ...is not simply to find alternative ways of representing the female sex...she is arguing that we need to rethink the relation between our being and our bodies, as well as between form and matter, self and other, if we are to be able to think of woman as a sexuate subject. Irigaray's explorations of female self-relation are designed to engender figures for a female autonomy that would permit us to affirm being (as) [at least] two.

The cultivation of female self-relation will be the realisation of sexuate difference: the realisation culture *and* nature and living in its breadth is, at least, two (Irigaray 1996). A realisation which reconfigures ethical, political, ontological, and social structures that create and govern our existence (Roberts 2014). This aspect, then, is a creative intervention into the sameness of narcissistic culture and a challenge to 'psychoanalytical models of subjectivity and existential models of the self' (Wheeler 2004: 230). Morny Joy (2011) argues Irigaray's creative intervention of female subjectivity resides in two related tasks. One 'is the cultivation of values and virtues, associated with female figures from the past – be they mythic or protohistoric' (Joy 2011: 225). Here, Irigaray (see 1986) seeks to create a positive, autonomous feminine divine from which a feminine imaginary can be realised. The realisation of this task manifests in Irigaray's deep engagement with Antigone (see Irigaray 1993a, 2000a, 2010a, 2010b) and, to a lesser extent, Aphrodite (see Irigaray 1993a). The other intervention lies with cultivating self-possession, self-consciousness, interiority and integrity – the cultivation of feminine subjectivities. It is in this second intervention that breath plays a vital role.[26]

The body enters autonomous presence in the practice of breathing. Irigaray's original construction of this argument resides in her development of a positive mother-daughter relationship,[27]which necessitates an autonomous female subjectivity. Phallocentric logic limits female subjectivity and the place of the feminine to a representation of the maternal. This not only reproduces the feminine as an object or thing to support the dominant place of man, but it also prevents the engendering of a female culture by reducing feminine relations to competition and rivalry (Roberts 2014). In breath, however, the daughter cultivates her own feminine autonomy and the potential for women-to-women sociality: 'it is the daughter's autonomous

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ultimately arguing: 'the charge of essentialism appeals to oversimplified dichotomies that need reworking.' Irigaray's work was vehemently considered as essentialist for years but such critiques have largely died out (Roberts 2014), and Irigaray's more recent writing are, in a related movement, accused of privileging sexuate difference over racial differences and, also, privileging the heterosexual, gender normative body.

[26] Breath is not the only instrument by which an autonomous feminine self-possession and integrity will be cultivated, other notable strategies include the development of an autonomous feminine language (see *The "Mechanics" of Fluids* in Irigaray 1985b; see *Love of the Other* in Irigaray 1993a; *The Sharing of Speech* in Irigaray 2002b; *Linguistics: Sharing Language in Difference* in Irigaray 2004a; *Language to Produce Something or to Produce Someone* Irigaray 2017; and for commentary Hass 2000; Olkowoski 2000; Pinggong 2018), of placental economies (see *On the Maternal Order* in Irigaray 1993b; and for commentary Fannin and Colls 2013;Schwab 1994), and of the image of the two lips (see '*When our Lips Speak Together*' Irigaray 1985b; and for commentary Boulous Walker 1998; R. Jones 2011). Advancing sexuate rights, reconfiguring representations of love, and developing positive representations of maternal genealogies also contribute to this task.

[27] Although beyond the scope of this thesis, sexuate difference reconfigures the mother-daughter relationship and the maternal body (see Cavallaro 2003; Fannin and Colls 2013; Irigaray 1981, 1985b, 1991, 1993a; Jacobs 2007; Roberts 2014; Whitford 1991a; Schwab 1994). Whilst in the earlier work breath is a strategy for developing positive mother-daughter relations, in Irigaray's later work – as we shall see – her thinking around breath has progressed. In the third aspect, breath is an instrument in its own right for cultivating an embodied, interior autonomy.

breathing that has enabled her to emerge as a feminine subjectivity that is not split from the mother' (Roberts 2014: 189). In breath the daughter takes care of her own life and separates the self from the maternal body first giving life. As Irigaray (1981: 61) writes:

> A little light enters me. Something inside me begins to stir. Barely. Something new has moved me. As though I'd taken a first step inside myself. As if a breath of air had penetrated a completely petrified being, unsticking its mass. Waking me from a long sleep. From an ancient dream… I start to breathe, or rather I start to breathe again…I no longer need your belly, your arms, or your words to return or to leave. I am still so close to you, and already so far away… You're there. I'm here. Between us so much air, light, space to share with each other.

In the act of respiration, the female body cultivates her own autonomy, a generative difference of her own body, and a relation to another autonomous feminine body. She breathes a world of her own, a world existing in addition to the masculine world and, thus, one challenging the sameness and one-subject logic of the Western culture to bring about a becoming that is at least two. The question now becomes how does the feminine and masculine coexist? How do we build a world shareable by the two?

3.3.3 The Third Aspect: The relational force of breath

The third aspect of Irigaray's work most closely moves with breath and is directly informed by her own practices of respiration and yoga. Whilst this aspect interacts and interweaves with the other two, it illustrates a noticeable shift in orientation and emphasis.[28] The third aspect primarily concentrates upon breath, love, relationality, ontology, the natural and the vegetal, and intersubjectivity. This aspect is Irigaray's most creative phase. She seeks to think and practice the becoming of new, alternative worlds wherein the self and other come together in peaceful and loving relations. The third aspect most directly, if not explicitly, addresses the question of peace and, more specifically, offers theoretical and practical mechanisms for thinking with an elemental and aerial ecology of peace-weaving – with an alternative horizon not founded upon a position of agonism.

Sexuate difference presupposes an ethical task and, arguably, it is in this third aspect that the ethics of sexuate difference gains acute attention. The third aspect presupposes a fundamental question both of and to humanity: how do we relate as self and other, and who and how might we become in this process of relation? As the trajectory of Irigaray's thinking has begun to acutely address the potential for

[28] A number of academics who engage in depth with Irigaray's thinking argue the later aspects of her work are a betrayal to what came before (see Cornell and Butlers 1998 and Schwab 2007 for comments). Engaging this critique and the general, broader dismissal of Irigaray's thinking, Cheah and Grosz (1998b) write: 'Irigaray's work seems to have suffered a curious atrophy in its translation across the Atlantic. Most commentators regard her as primarily a thinker of subjectivity, identity, sexuality, and desire and rarely consider her as a political theorist or an analyst of social and cultural life. Thus, even the most sympathetic readers have tended to extract the social and political implications of her work from her earlier and primarily psychoanalytic texts, which are then taken as so emblematic of her work that her later writings are rarely read, let alone discussed. Consequently, *Speculum of the Other Woman* and *This Not One* have effectively functioned as synecdoches of her entire oeuvre. These are clearly important feminist texts, but they do not represent the entirety of her work, which has developed, refined itself, and undergone many inflections, reorientations, and differences of emphasis since her earliest publications nearly twenty-five years ago. This, of course, is hardly surprising: it marks the history and maturation, the development and elaboration of the political and intellectual work of a lifetime.'

peaceful sharing in difference, her critique of the Western world has been articulated as a reality of the social realm and social forms, where it takes on a broader ontological significance beyond masculine-feminine relations, even as sexuate difference remains the first difference.[29] The third aspect returns to the forgetting of air Irigaray first identified from her engagement with Heidegger. This critique has however shifted. The forgetting of air is no longer thought exclusively as the unthinking of female subjectivity but, also, the forgetting of ontological conditions of relationality. Her critique of hierarchical sameness and the question of sharing is read within the broader dualisms of 'self-other' and 'us-them' – a dualism defining wars, conflicts, and violence throughout the world. Before we begin to explore breath as the cultivation of a relational horizon, we should first consider this broader articulation.

The Western world, today, persists on the respiration of an 'already exhaled, already used, not truly pure air' (Irigaray 2002a: 74). We do not consider living, growing, and blossoming a task of the human body. Rather than cultivating what could be, we engage in the task of exploring and exploiting what already is. Any impetus for creation and invention has been lost. We remain in the past, where we celebrate the dead and forget the living (Irigaray 2002a).

> Unveiling the mystery of our origin is probably the thing that most motivates our quests and plans. This question so much worries us that, perhaps, we have not yet begun to live, in ourselves and in the world. We would like to know from where we come, from what or from whom we exist, in order to dwell there and grow in continuation with that from what or from whom we are. Our most secret dream may consist in being a tree, the existence of which is determined by the place where it took root. Hence our ceaseless search for roots: in our genealogy, in the place where we were born, in our culture, our religion or our language, and also in what we project onto the most distant future but which, in reality, corresponds to the quest of the most indiscernible closeness (Irigaray 2017: v).

We opt for stasis opposed to living, for the comfort and certainty of a rooted dwelling. Furthermore, we approach and perceive everything and everyone else through a rooted origin. We root individual bodies – both the self and the other – within mass communities, cultures, and traditions.

To locate the origins of the body in static roots, approaches both the self and the other as essentialised, determined objects known in their totality. The other is not met as a living, breathing body but as an object engineered by the enveloping, cultural milieu into which it was born. Reflecting on the world as it

[29] The question of ontology is given greater emphasis in this third aspect and, whilst in some ways Irigaray has been the force of this reorientation, the increasingly ontological emphasis largely resides with how feminist scholar are engaging with her work as an ontological reconfiguration (see Whitford 1991a, 1991b, 2007; Grosz 2005, 2011; R. Jones 2011; Mortensen 2002; Roberts 2014, 2017; Stone 2006). Following Rachel Jones (2011), the movement from 'sexual' difference to 'sexuate' difference can be interpreted as illustrative of the increasing ontological emphasis of her work. The use of sexuate and sexual difference are related, which becomes clear when Irigaray's work is approached in its totality and as movement both of critique and creation. Rachel Jones (2011: 4) understands: '...sexual difference to be that which western culture has forgotten and which Irigaray seeks to recover, whilst the sexuate involves taking up a positive relation to sexual difference by acknowledging it as the irreducible difference which inflects every aspect of our being.'

is and the reduction of living relations to appropriative subject-object relations, Irigaray (2017: 69) writes:

> When our logic favours subject–object relations, without being much concerned with discovering and establishing what would be a logic of intersubjectivity, it does not consider breath and energy which enliven the existence of living beings and render them irreducible to objects subjected to a human grasp and assessment. It removes beings from their living conditions and reduces them to inanimate products. However variant the grammar may be, that its category of animate person makes possible, the other, and even oneself, are then subjected to syntactic structures which paralyze the becoming of each and of the relations that each can have with other living beings.

A logic favouring subject-object relation, paralyses relations between the self and the other to the violence of assimilation, appropriation, and dependency. In this paralysis, air is passive and unregistered, breathed without engagement, reflection, and encounter. Breath is forgotten as bodies are rooted in mass traditions, cultures and communities, where living, relational, and intersubjective experience is reduced to static repetition – a world in which critique is essential and agonism holds the originary position. Irigaray, however, does not remain at the level of critique but animates a return to the element, to our original potential. Origins here lie not in the ceaseless search for 'natural' and innate roots, not with belonging to a mass Being. Elemental origins are the making of incipient possibility. Peace without breath is an impossibility.

The third aspect of Irigaray's work is undoubtedly the most creative. Grosz moves with this creativity to read sexuate difference as a force. In her book *Time Travels: Feminism, nature and power*, Grosz discusses the future of feminist thinking and stages an uneasy, yet productive, conversation between Irigaray and Gilles Deleuze. This fraught encounter creates novel modes of thought, by rupturing the habitual thinking of both Irigarayan and Deluzian philosophies to animate new lines of difference. Grosz (2005: 172) determines the future of feminist thinking to lie with the mobilisation of 'sexual difference as force; and [the animation of] force itself as divided, differential, sexualised.'

Without defining what force is, Grosz gives force a particular materiality and movement. Force(s) is both distinct and a multiplicity. It 'is that which both establishes and severs connections between (forces that compose) things and relations' (Grosz 2005: 188). Forces have their own history, intentionality, and interests. Not mobilised by intentions, goals or purpose, force simply seeks to act, 'to expand, to become more and other' (Grosz 2005: 190). This movement of becoming is invariably a relation of intensity and forever a competitive struggle. Force embodies a relation of magnitude of more or less without depletion or end and, in encountering other forces, force is always-already in contestation whilst being contestatory. Force not only creates competition and struggle between forces active within one sphere, it is also the animation of 'alignment, cooperation, and tension between forces' operational within

difference spheres (Grosz 2005: 188).[30] Forces are imperceptible, constituting an 'inhuman, subhuman field, a field of particles or elements of force which are only provisionally or temporarily grouped together in the form of entities and action' (Grosz 2005: 189). I believe the materiality and movement Grosz gives to force is locatable in the materiality and movement of breath. Thus, I read breath as the ontological force of relational difference.

The second aspect of Irigaray's thinking establishes breath as autonomous. However, in this third aspect, I read relationality to be at the heart of her thinking. As Irigaray (2019: xx) states: ontology 'never concerns only one being but the relation between two beings.' Although emphasis in this aspect is more concerned with the question of relationality than autonomy, the practice of breathing is continually articulated as an autonomous act through which life is given to body (see Irigaray 2002a, 2015a, 2016, 2017). A body is conceived by two and its existence first resides in an other body. The self, however, gives birth to their own body through its first breath.

> Our existence cannot be the outcome of mere chance, and our will to live clearly manifested itself at the time of our birth. We were the ones who determined its moment. We were also the one who gave birth to ourselves through our first breathing. In spite of the long dependence of the little human on others for its survival, it gave life to itself to come into the world, and it gave life to itself alone (Irigaray 2017: 1).

The act of birth, residing in the first breath of the new-born, is the 'primary and original process of our autonomy' (Irigaray 2019 seminar). In its first breath the body takes root in the very act of breathing that gives life and autonomous difference to the body: 'the human being is made of matter but also of breath' (Irigaray 2002a: ix). Breath feeds the body with vitality, life, and growth; it is 'the *a priori* condition of all…*a prioris*' (Irigaray 1999a: 12, original emphasis). We remain in the self in breath and cultivate a corporeal interiority through which we make our worlds forever more (Irigaray 2019 seminar). Irigaray is quick to point out this is not a perpetual becoming of the same, it is not to take root in an air that has already been breathed, but a becoming which is already a venturing beyond that which has been known and experienced in life: we are nothing other than a 'to-be' (Irigaray 2017: 101). The first breath of becoming is impossible to appropriate, it is not, nor could it be, a used or impure air. However, and perhaps in a movement beyond Irigaray, breath *is* always-already shared.

For a moment I wish to directly intertwine the different aspects of Irigaray's thinking by returning to the mother-daughter relation. Breathing, we remember, unsticks the daughter as a petrified object. The daughter blossoms independently from her mother in breath, she becomes in her own difference but, crucially, she remains *in relation* to her mother. Breathing animates both proximity and spacing to cultivate a relation in-between mother and daughter.

[30] Sexuate difference as a force, then, cannot be read to position either violence or peace as originary. Rather, in animates world and becomings in which each remain a possibility.

> Through carrying the child, through speaking to the child, more generally through mothering the child once born, she shares her life, her breath. If she gave it without keeping some of it, without remaining alive, the other would lose existence. She does not simply give, she shares… The mother gives her breath and lets the other go; she gives the other life and autonomy. From the beginning, she passes on physical and metaphysical existence to the other (Irigaray 2002a: 80-81).

In-between the mother and daughter are generative relations from which autonomy blossoms. The in-between is not the advent of fusion or destruction. Relationality is the very articulation of difference; it is the articulation of the autonomous body. Sharing is not to share in the breath of sameness but a sharing in-between the breath of difference, a sharing in the autonomy of self-differentiation, where the first breath of the to-be is not simply grounded in a bounded body but in a constellation of embodied and sensuous relations active prior to representational form. In this creative aspect, Irigaray thinks relationality so that it is ontologically prior. Difference, then, cannot be thought, or at least not in the first instance, as difference from one being to another (as a quantitative difference). The body's autonomy is found first and foremost in the 'self-differentiating relations that bring such beings into being' and cultivate their continual growth (R. Jones 2015: 159). As Irigaray (2019: xx) writes:

> We always try to capture being in an identity. But being, in particular our own being, results from a conjunction and can neither be nor develop or flower without conjoining. To speak of being, and of a new being as such is thus impossible. Being remains always an event or advent to which we can give birth through our way of conjoining one another.

The body is defined not in separation or distinction from the other, but in a relation of self-differentiation in-between the self and the other.

Crucially, this is not to think of community as merely two.[31] Nor it is a community of a series of one plus one plus one (Irigaray 2004a). The relational limit in-between creates and preserves a space for the two. However, as Rachel Jones (2015: 161) acutely illustrates, the in-between simultaneously 'undoes the idea that this two can be anything like two ones – or could even add up to two at all.' The in-between is replete with generative relations, and it is in the pre-existing, yet continually moving, interplay of relationality that bodily specificity emerges through patterns of similarity and difference: 'neither one nor two, such a subject is incalculably in-between' (R. Jones 2015: 161). Irigaray (1985a: 139) herself writes the two syntaxes are:

> …irreducible in their strangeness and eccentricity one to the other. Coming out of different times, places, logics, "representations", and economies. In fact, of course, these terms cannot fittingly be designated by the number "two" and the adjective "different", if only because they are not susceptible to comparison.

[31] Irigaray, particularly as her thinking moves through its different aspects, has been criticised for privileging heterosexuality, most prominently by Butler in an interview with Cheah and Grosz (1998a: 28) when she states: 'But the intense overt heterosexuality of *An Ethics of Sexual Difference* and indeed of the sexuate rights discourse…not only brought to the fore a kind of presumptive heterosexuality, but actually made heterosexuality into the privileged locus of ethics' (see also Bergoffen 2007; Johnston 2015; Murphy 2007). This criticism has been refuted by several scholars (see Grosz 2011; R. Jones 2015; Roberts 2014: Schwab 1998; Spivak 1993).

Bodies are at least two, but they are not limited by two. The autonomous process of self-differentiation resides in relationality, and this is why encounters across the difference are animated in a sharing of breath.

Breath is not simply held within the body, but a movement bringing the inside out and the outside in. Breathing mediates between the internal and the external to create an encounter – or, more precisely, a relation of differentiation in proximity – in-between the self and the other. The oscillation between inhalation and exhalation gives form and interiority to oneself, whilst simultaneously receiving it from the interiority of the other (Malabou and Ziarek 2012). In the interiority of the self, there is always a reserve or excess of breath to be shared with the other, 'as a gift, grace of the moment of our encounter with the other' (Ŝkof 2018: 60). Autonomous breathing, then, does not construct a split from the other. In breath, the body blossom in its own interiority *within* a shared ecology of relationality – breath is not merely embodying but always already relational.

Breath holds autonomy and sharing in relation. For Irigaray this tension can potentially be resolved. In an exchange I had with Irigaray at the 2017 seminar,[32] Irigaray stressed autonomy and relationality as two different processes, arguing it is integral that they remain separate. She acknowledged breath cultivates an opening to the other while also preserving the autonomy of the self. However, in our exchange, Irigaray argued before there can be relation and sharing, there must first be autonomy: 'relations without autonomy are fictitious, as it is starting from autonomy that we can be relational and this is the problem for present existence and for peace' (Irigaray 2019 seminar).[33] Autonomous breath prevents a return to a undifferentiated state of life. Unsurprisingly, as our dialogue developed, Irigaray illustrated breath on its own was not enough to cultivate peaceful sharing. She indicated the creation of shared worlds reside in the practice of breathing plus 'something else' (Irigaray 2017 seminar). Breath opens the body to sharing and is present in the cultivation of a sharing in-between, but breath on its own is not, for Irigaray, a shared relation. Irigaray (2008b: 27) states this in conversation with Judith Still,

[32] Since 2003, Irigaray has held a seminar for doctoral researchers engaging with her work. The format of the seminar includes a presentation from each of the attendees detailing the aspects of their doctoral research most closely drawing upon Irigaray's philosophy, a discussion of each presentation within the group, comments from Irigaray, and question from participants to Irigaray. Additionally, there are sessions devoted to an explanation of keywords or key-thoughts, as selected by the participants, as well as a personal meeting with Irigaray. In 2017 I was fortunate to attend the seminar. It was an intense, challenging week but an experience integral to the development of my engagement with Irigaray's work.

[33] In terms of peace building it is interesting to point out some organisation advocate for and work with people on a single identity basis. In simple terms, single identity work 'involves engaging individuals singularly from within one's community to discuss, address and potentially challenge the causes of conflict, with particular emphasis on skills and confidence building measures' (Church, Visser and Johnson 2002: 2). Whilst engineering inter-community contact tends to be at the forefront of peace building work, at least in Northern Ireland, in some arenas and circumstances it is deemed preferable to first engage groups in single identity work. Single identity work is seen as particularly useful when cross-community work is regarded as untenable, due to continuing feelings of fear, mistrust, and suspicion. Only once these acute feelings have been addressed and those involved feel secure in their own identity will cross-community encounters be coordinated. Despite years of practice, it remains a source of debate in Northern Ireland's peacebuilding arena whether single identity work is a necessary first step to building cross-community relations or, rather, an end in and of itself (Church, Visser and Johnson 2002).

when she says: 'sharing air is not sufficient to maintain the two but cultivating one's own breathing is needed to keep one's own autonomy and the difference between us, especially as two.'

Whilst I hope to leave space for an articulation of autonomy precluding sharing, thinking through moments and spaces of peace-weaving I find it fruitful to stay with the tension in-between sharing and autonomy cultivated in the practice of breath. Irigaray herself has acknowledged this tension and the need of both autonomy and relation for the creation of shared and peaceful worlds. In April 2019 I had the opportunity to attend another seminar with Luce Irigaray. I had, since our previous meeting in 2017, been pondering the question of relation and autonomy as cultivated in the practice of breathing. I had returned to Irigaray's thinking around breath following the 2017 seminar, however, my reading of this work continued to coalesce around the relationality and sharing of breath. Breath was the element that was shared by all bodies regardless of their differences (Irigaray 2002a). It was in breath that we could 'assume the solitude of our singularity' (Irigaray 2016: viii). Yet, in a shared air we receive breath, and the movement and blossoming of living vitality it engenders, from the other (Irigaray 2001: 311). At the 2019 seminar, when I asked about relationality and autonomy, Irigaray (2019 seminar) clarified:

> Autonomy does not proceed relationality and relationality does not proceed autonomy. Rather, autonomy and relationality are in a dialectical process. All of life must go from autonomy to relationality and back to autonomy and so forth.

She continued by illustrating how this dialectical process – how the maintenance of the tension between relationality and autonomy – necessitates an oscillation in-between interiority (the return) and exteriority (the approach). The movement of this oscillation must be constant so as not to lose the self or the other and, in doing so, give one an originary place. Breath, as an inappropriable movement in-between the inside and the outside, animates the continual cultivation of the oscillation between relationality and autonomy, wherein relation *is* 'the self-differentiating process of being' (Jones 2019: 114).

Irigaray also posits breath as the location of the tension in-between autonomy and relationality. She states: 'thanks to what it grants us of life and access to transcendence, a cultivation of breath allows us to assume the solitude of our singularity while venturing to share with another ontological destiny' (Irigaray 2017: viii). What is more, Irigaray (2017: viii) places this tension as heart of her creative and inventive sexuate ontology.

> This [sexuate belonging] occurs thanks to a determination which provides us with a dynamism at once autonomous and relational able to transform our ecstatic fate into a personal incarnation that longs for sharing our ecstasies with the different other, which converts the abandonment of our birth into a solitude which gives us back to our being, but also to an original relation of desire and love with the other different from us by nature.

Irigaray's thinking, then, is concerned not with identities or subjects but with *relations in difference,* and sexuate difference is the force concerned 'with the movement of difference that marks the very energies of existence before and beyond any lives or imputed identity' (Grosz 2011: 91). It is a shift in attention to the relational and intersubjective becoming of autonomous difference or, to what Grosz (2011) has

described as, the prepersonal forces of relational incommensurability forever making the body more. To deny a strict chronology between embodied autonomy and a sharing in-between is not to collapse the process of autonomy and the process of relationality into a singular movement. To move with the tension contained in the continual oscillation of relationality and autonomy, is a continual making of bodies, worlds, and relations in an aerial ecology that is always-already in-between.

Breathing in-between is transformative. The in-between is an 'indeterminate space of undecidability, a tear in the fabric of dualism' (Grosz 2001: 93), and a split from the hierarchical horizon of sameness. Irigaray's thinking, thus, is the creation of a new horizon, within which violence, domination, exclusion, and hierarchy do not hold an originary position – a horizon in which differences are not viewed as inherently agonistic but as the very movement of living and blossoming vitality. The creation of a new horizon is an activity of 'world-making' (Tsing 2015: 292). World-making shifts political emphasis from the unveiling of agonism and violence towards the animation of 'extant and unfolding alternatives' making novel worlds and futures in their very enactment (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018: 75). It is these futures that hold the potential for peace.

The creation of world-making may reside in the future, but the weaving of peaceful worlds can be theorised from life. Irigaray (1996: 10) herself argues she is a 'militant for the impossible, which is not to say a utopian. Rather [she] want[s] what is yet to be as the only possibility of a future.' This future, this alternative horizon, conveys the possibility of transformation, creation, and making. It is, however, a future grounded in the present; it is a new horizon opening within living vitality as it emerges in movement. It is with the guiding appeal to the actual and the impossible that Irigaray's thinking gains both political and ethical importance (Deutscher 2002). Irigaray's philosophy is lived and living. The creation of a new horizon, of alternative peaceful worlds and futures, lies in the practical, embodying activity of breathing and, crucially, in an encounter mediated by a sharing of breath.

3.4 Practicing a New Horizon: Tracing the more-than of the encounter

Parallel to the increasing attention given to the question of peace, geographers – and perhaps in not a completely unrelated movement – have started to advance a close and explicit consideration of the encounter. These two relatively new arenas of geographical thought should not be approached as two distinct fields. By thinking peace and encounter in relation we can begin to animate an authentic commitment to peace-as-peace. The geographies of encounters literature, mobilised by timely social and political debates regarding community cohesion and hostilities between existing and newly arrived groups in the United Kingdom and beyond, has inspired a renewed engagement with Gordon Allport's contact theory (Amin 2002; Askins 2015; Valentine 2008; Valentine and Sadgrove 2012, 2014). Seeking a more complex and critical engagement than offered by Allport, geographers mobilise the encounter as a transformative path for thinking through the advent of difference.

The word encounter, the etymology of which Wilson (2017a) argues is important to consider, stems from the French *encontr*e meaning to meet, confront, or fight an adversary or opposing force. The coming together of opposites has been witnessed most vividly in colonial narratives (Wilson 2017b) or in what Mary Louise Pratt (1992: 4) calls 'contact zones', which she defines as 'social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination.' This antagonistic meeting of opposites is articulated in binary logics of us and them, which define border imaginaries and distinguish the natural, internal presence from the external, foreign body (Ahmed 2000). The etymology of encounter suggests a form of contact originating from a position where characteristics and relations of antagonism and violence have already been defined – a relation in which there is always a need to uncover the violence behind any possible potential for peace. The geographies of encounters literature mobilise an alternative reading. This reading, following Wilson (2017b: 609), advances a conception of the encounter 'as a relational event', from which the question of difference – and I would add peace – can be approached. Encounters are undoubtedly bound up with inherited truths and replete with the recognition of identity categories, but this alternative reading also seeks to move beyond critique and think encounters differently and, what is more, creatively.

Encounters are the activity of city life. Doreen Massey (2005) has written that the city is a site of 'throwntogetherness', whereby different trajectories, bodies, and worlds come together in 'anticipated and unanticipated encounters' (Yeoh 2015: 545). However, an encounter is much more than coming together in city space; contact is not synonymous with encounter (Valentine 2008). Helen Wilson and Jonathon Darling (2016: 1) argue if encounters are to be taken seriously, they cannot reside with the provision of another 'empty' metaphor for the social and material assembling of urban life. Rather, to take encounters seriously 'is to critically attend to the many complexities, contestations and contradictions of contemporary urbanism, with a specific attention to difference.' Encounters are fundamentally and inherently concerned with difference.

Encounters are not simply the meeting of different bodies, but the very making of difference. As Wilson (2017b: 609, original emphasis) articulates, 'we are c*onstituted* in and by our encounters with others.' Differences, then, are not fixed upon a hierarchical horizon wherein they are constructed as adversary and antagonistic before the event of encounter. Nor does the city simple contain encounters between bodies already differentiated according to a predetermined, hierarchical logic. Differences, rather, emerge from encounters (Wilson 2017a, 2017b; Wilson and Darling 2016). If the city is composed from encounters, encounters can rewrite the city so it is not a mosaic village composed of predetermined and immobile borders, but an 'evolving and unfinished spatial, social and political formation' created from the pulling together and pushing apart of bodies, spaces, and objects (Wilson and Darling 2016: 9) – a world in continual making.

Encounters not only rewrite the city but *make* the body differently. Wilson (2017a: 456) argues 'encounters demand that we rethink the limits of the body, its capacities and thresholds.' They challenge

normalised modes of perception, inherited assumptions, and habitual ways of thinking and acting. The destabilising nature of the encounter prevents a grounding in the comfort of essentialised, known beings. The body cannot be determined prior to the encounter, it cannot be recognised as an already essentialised Catholic or Protestant being, and what is more, the body will always exceed the encounter. Encounters 'open up the question of how we approach the body as a specific form of relationality' (Wilson 2017a: 456), opposed to a predetermined category or label. This is an opening onto the question of peace and the potential for peaceful relations; it is a question about an alternative and novel world-making.

Despite a growing interest in the geographies of encounter and an increasing emphasis upon their transformative potential (see Ahmed 2000; Anderson 2014; Bhatti et al. 2009; Brown 2012; Matejskova and Leitner 2011; Popke 2006; Spinney 2015; Valentine 2008), there has been little discussion of what actually happens *in* spaces of encounter (Wilson and Darling 2016) and how they may build relations of care, kindness, respect, and trust upon which peace is predicated.[34] Once again, it is here that I turn to Irigaray and, primarily, her philosophical engagement with breath. Irigaray not only thinks with the encounter, but also through it. To think through the encounter is to think with breath: breath is the movement of difference and difference is made in the encounter, thus, encounters invariable happen in breath.

Irigaray's work gives voice to a distinct form of relation which, following Judith Butler's (1993: 115, my emphasis) close reading, 'is not primarily that of an encounter, but, rather, a constitutive intertwining, a dynamic *differentiation in proximity*.' This constitutive intertwining draws bodies together and pulls them apart in relations that are necessarily limited. Irigaray does not conceive of limits in a traditional sense. Limits are not a void, a negative, to be overcome. Nor are limits static. The limits infusing Irigaray's thinking are embodied, sensuous, imperceptible, dynamic, and always-already relational. Limits move in-between the self and the other, touching bodies with the realisation 'you are not the whole and I am not the whole' (Irigaray 1996: 103). This realisation undercuts unity and identity on both subjective and political levels (Malabou and Ziarek 2012); it challenges the binary, hierarchical horizon and cultivates a space-time for what lies beyond the body's own limits, which cannot be known, appropriated, or consumed but which, nevertheless, reverberates within one's own space-time as a condition for one's own breath (E. R. Jones 2015). The body moves with autonomy only in relation to other who, ultimately, remains an enchanting unknown.

> I *move* on the condition that there is an other, that I am not the whole, that I am limited in my subjectivity, my discourse, by the inappropriable place of a between-two that maintains the

[34] This is not, however, to say encounters will immediately and always produce relations upon which peace can be predicated (see Listerborn 2015; Staouraiti 2012). Valentine and Harris (2016) have argued encounters need to be engaged with critically, and not naively approached as an activity of *only* meaningful contact. Thus, I am not arguing encounters will always produce relations of care but that encounters taking place in breath can be the creation of a new horizon in which violence, conflict, and contestation are *no more originary* than peaceful relations.

> irreducibility of the other's relational self with respect to mine (E. R. Jones 2015: 22, original emphasis).

The negative conditions a relational movement opening to the other and towards a shared spacing existing in-between, whilst also embodying a return to the world, autonomy, and difference that is mine (Irigaray 1996). It is a movement of both inhalation and exhalation, of proximity and difference, of interiority and exteriority. This elemental movement corresponds to 'a kind of double limit that is assumed by both' (E. R. Jones 2015: 16), a kind of relational weaving moving in-between the self and the other, in-between 'you' and "me". The structure of the negative – a structure that is ontological – moves with breath (Irigaray seminar 2019); a respiration moving with wonder, silence, and sharing. It is these three key concepts Irigaray works offers to think through the encounter.

Wonder is the *felt movement of difference*. It is the very event of the other (Irigaray 1993a). Wonder pulsates through the encounter animating moments of mystery and surprise, in which bodies are touched by the becoming of difference in advance of the imposition of form. Breath animates the potential for wonder by moving the body to silence. Breath is both active and actively passive. Encountering the other in the active silence of breath gives voice to relational limits moving in-between; the body senses the limits of the self and gifts to the other the autonomous movement of their own breath. In silence, wonder becomes intertwined with a respect for the other and for the excessive becoming of difference. Silence, in turn, is an opening onto sharing; it is in silence that we wait 'ever-ready for sharing' (Watrous 2015: 151). Irigaray's encounter is always-already shared in-between.

Encounters taking place in breath are the creation of an alternative, novel horizon. This future horizon is composed not from sameness, polarisation, and hierarchy; it is not a horizon in which agonism and violence hold the originary position. Whilst remaining forever speculative, the 'not-yet' of the future horizon is not 'experienced as a void that we have to fill' (Irigaray 2017: 71), but as an opening cultivating 'an availability to welcome truth, beauty, joy, one could say grace' (Del Gatto 2015); an availability opening to an ethics of care (Teo and Neo 2017). It is only when we move within the elemental and vital ecology of this future horizon that we can become attentive to the everyday relational activities of care within which peace is always-already being woven. Practices of peace and peace-weaving need breath; they need living, dynamic spaces of relationality and movement and, crucially, the unknown ethical possibilities emerging from them.

Respite: Breathing Exercise

Get comfortable, relax your shoulders and sit back tall in the chair. Place both feet flat on the ground roughly hip-width apart, place your arm by your side or on your lap. You may want to close your eyes.

Breathe in through the nose for four counts.

O N E

T W O

T H R E E

F O U R

Breathe deeply and feel first you belly and, then, your lungs expand as you slowly draw in air.

Hold the breath in the body for two counts.

O N E

T W O

Pause. Take a moment to be still with your breath. To stop and listen-to its movement.

Then breathe out through the mouth for six counts:

O N E

T W O

T H R E E

F O U R

F I V E

S I X

Breath out slowly, allowing the air to escape at a steady, controlled pace from the lungs, first, and then from the belly.

Keep going all together.

B R E A T H E I N

H O L D

B R E A T H E O U T

H O L D

B R E A T H E I N

H O L D

B R E A T H E O U T

H O L D

B R E A T H E I N

H O L D

B R E A T H E O U T

H O L D

B R E A T H E I N

H O L D

B R E A T H E O U T

H O L D

B R E A T H E I N

H O L D

B R E A T H E O U T

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B R E A T H E O U T

Methodology, Methods, and Spaces

Knowing I wanted to follow breath – its movement, materiality, and relationality – I headed to Belfast acutely aware to begin to answer this question, I needed a research practice more fluid, more ephemeral, and more open than traditional methodological approaches. Yet, at this stage, I was unsure of what such a practice would look like.

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4.1 Introduction

The weaving of peace cannot solely reside in thinking peace differently. Animating peace-as-peace necessitates methodologies and methods that *do* peace research differently. The creativity of Irigaray's thinking is inherently active; it is an event engaging with worlds in an open, excessive, and relational manner. Although Irigaray's work does not explicitly put forth a methodology, Irigaray's thinking does suggest a methodological approach. I believe an open, excessive, and relational empirical engagement can be animated in a methodology of *tracing*.

Imitating Anna Tsing's (2015) ethnographic method, I put breath and its vitality centre stage. Both theoretically and methodologically, I trace breath: I follow the rhythm, tempo, and touch of breath; I respire with encounters created in breath; and I move in-between the silences and relations cultivated in the embodied practice breathing. Tracing does not attempt to pin down breath to a singular ontological dimension or to conceptual limits and definitive endings. Rather, tracing crafts a space-time for new ways of entering and moving in the field and for creating more ephemeral, embodied forms and forces of knowledge that 'cut across normative accounts of what it means to know' (Manning 2016: 27).[35]

An excessive, open empirical approach can be created through a dialogue moving in-between Irigaray's thinking, affect-based methodologies,[36] and feminist methodologies of diffraction.[37] Both these methodologies reject representation, which they regard as inattentive to processual and relational becomings. The visual, for Irigaray (1993a: 175), is a 'sense that can totalise, enclose, in its own way,' as knowledge is located *only* in what is visually observable and tangibly representable. Methodologies privileging representation are unable to account for the effects and affects of difference beyond

[35] Irigaray (2017: v) argues 'we become existent by cutting ourselves off – by ec-sisting – from out origins.' Here, as will become clear, I am arguing knowledge creation resides in cutting ourselves off from the traditional origins of 'strong' knowledge. Strong knowledge demands powerful discourses which organise 'events into understandable and seemingly predictable trajectories' (Gibson-Graham 2014: 148) that have an embracing reach and reduced, clarified meaning (Gibson-Graham 2006b: 4).

[36] Dorothea Olkowski (2000: 80) reads Irigaray's ontology as a '"morpho-logic" appropriate to affectivity' rather than representational form. Irigaray (see 1993b) voices a fluid morphology folding in-between 'streams of affectivity,' which although not necessarily perceivable are felt as effect (Olkowski 2000: 80).

[37] Diffraction as a methodology was first conceived by Donna Haraway (see 1992, 1997) and, then, elaborated most prominently by feminist physicist Karen Barad (2007, 2014, see also Hultman and Lenz Taguchi 2010; Thiele 2014a; van der Tuin 2014).

'taxonomic marks grounding difference as apartheid' (Haraway 1992: 299). Opposed to representation and understandings of a 'transparent, rational and continuous' human subject (Thrift 2007: 14), these methodologies move with ecologies of action and relational assemblages encompassing both human and non-human forces. These forces may be 'unformed and unstructured but…[they are] nevertheless highly organised and effectively analysable…in effect, as effect' (Massumi 1996: 237). Methodologies exceeding representation move with the temporal flow of becoming and, also, the 'entangled structure of the changing and contingent ontology of the world, including the ontology of knowing' (Barad 2007: 73). Unless we begin to animate research practices attentive to processes that move *prior* to, if still within, dominant and pervasive identificatory framings, peace and its possibilities will be confined to static, territorial structures simply maintaining 'what is'. It is the attention to difference, alongside the entangled weaving of relationality, which put affect, diffraction and tracing into a productive onto-epistemological conversation.

This chapter is composed of three sections. The first section elaborates on tracing as an affective, entangled, Irigarayan methodology which, I argue, differs from the traditional geographic practice of mapping. Tracing, as I conceive of it, embodies three interrelated characteristics that are each discussed in turn: a whole-body tracing, tracing in-between, and a situated tracing. Having detailed the methodological position of tracing, I move on to discuss the specific methods mobilised to trace breath: textual analysis, observing participation, interviewing, and creative writing. Finally, I introduce Turas and the CTS* as my two empirical spaces.

4.2 Tracing Breath: An Affective, Entangled Irigarayan Methodology

Geographers traditionally, if not graphically, are engaged in a process of mapping.[38] Mapping aims to make the focus of research visible through social imaginary frames that, in turn, contour research. Mapping is an act of representation starting from and reproducing research objects within defined and definitive frames, which in Northern Ireland continues to be the ubiquitous, overtly simplistic Catholic-Protestant binary. Mapping approaches the field with the assumption the research object, human or non-human, has a definitive shape, place, flow, process, relationality, ecology, and/or movement that can be grasped, plotted in time and space, and made representable in a definitive 'truth'. Approaching the field with the objective of mapping expunges, or at the very least reduces, difference, ambiguity, contradiction, and becoming. Positing the terms of the account prior to the exploration of what is happening or moving, stultifies creativity within the limits of what is already known and restricts

[38] I wish to stress that I am discussing mapping in a very traditional sense. I am, thus, not taking issues with the more creative forms of mapping and critical cartography advanced by geographers (see Caquard 2013; Cassidy 2012; Del Casino and Hanna 2005; della Dora 2009a; Dodge and Kitchin 2013; Harris and Hazen 2005; Kitchin, Gleeson and Dodge 2013; Krygier 2006; Perkins 2007; Sletto 2009; Young and Gilmore 2013), which aim to artistically, and often from within an everyday and collaborative space, challenge that stasis of what is (Crampton and Krygier 2006). Arguably, then, my position can be accused as crude and lacking nuance. Yet, the opposition between mapping and tracing is less an argument against mapping per se and, rather, is a distinction drawn upon to facilitate an argument calling for more creative, affective, entangled, and moving forms of 'knowledge' and 'knowledge-making'.

complexity and ambiguity within mapped borders of pre-existing forms of knowledge. Mapping is removed from the vitality and dynamism of living; it is a 'cut that stills' (Manning 2016: 33).

Tracing, as both method and methodology, gives voice to research as an eventful encounter. It does not aim to visibly delineate where breath, and the differences and relations cultivated in the practice of breathing, appear. Rather, it moves with the effects and affects of the appearance and touch of breath in movements of becoming (Thiele 2014a). Tracing is a practice capable of attending to shared, peaceful relations already active in Belfast, without over-determining encounters and the relations, bodies, and worlds active within them. It is a tracing of embodied relations as they are respiring and inspiring and, what is more, of their creative reconfiguration in an ecological process of world-making. Tracing is both 'process and the result of a process' (Sehgal 2014: 189). To mobilise a more processual and less definitive research practice is not to withdraw from the political, but to animate research events and encounters as vital political spaces in and of themselves. Tracing is grounded in three interrelated characteristics – a whole-body tracing, tracing in-between, and a situated tracing – that I now discuss in turn.

4.2.1 A Whole-Body Tracing

Breath evades mapping. It is largely invisible, and its movement and spatiality do not correspond to a definitive form, shape, or direction. Yet, breath continually touches upon the body. As a movement folding in-between the inside and the outside, breath cannot be kept at a distance. Breath is a relation and dynamic movement rarely seen but always felt in and as effect. This 'feltness' suggests that we can begin to tentatively trace breath through an embodied witnessing that is at once generous, attentive, open, and responsive (Dewsbury 2003).

Embodied witnessing does not stand back and observe at a distance but moves with the body as a responsive and active agent within worlds. This is not about directing the body towards the world from a mapped point or location but a movement of 'the world from within and as part of it' (Barad 2007: 88). It is a kind of everyday 'fleshy or carnal seeing and thinking' (Irigaray 2008b: 109) that converses with the entire 'goings on' – with the feelings, intensities, sounds, sights, textures, and movement as they *touch* in-between sensing bodies (Barad 2003; Dewsbury 2010; Morton 2005). Our culture is dominated by the visual and representational. Yet, as Irigaray (2015a: 280) illustrates, it is 'touch [that] takes part in all our sensory perceptions.' Touch forgoes representation to foster a haptic sensorial and embodied engagement. Tracing breath necessitates a whole-body engagement attentive to the touch of *all* sensory perception. Through the feltness of touch we, potentially, begin to animate the capacity to attend to the less noticeable politics of the everyday, which are missed when we privilege visual, objective representation (Papadopoulos, Stephenson, and Tsianos 2008).

Witnessing from within the world encompasses, what Nigel Thrift (2002: 296) has termed, a whole 'bodily logic of sense.' A whole-body tracing encounters sound, sight, smell, and touch as 'different facets

of the same activity' (Ingold 2000: 261). This animates an embodied opening to the specific event in the present and puts the specificity of the event into present relation, as the body becomes attentive to invisible and imperceptible forces 'felt, even in anticipation, as movements registering, and resonating, across, within and [in-]between the sensing spaces of bodies' (McCormack 2009: 36). Through a whole-body tracing 'we learn to register and become sensitive to what the world is made of' (Thrift 2004: 90), and to what makes it forevermore. To engage the body as the sensing, attentive tool of tracing is to emphasise action, relationality, and the in-between, as both the subject of inquiry and the approach to research (Popke 2009; Dewsbury 2000; Thrift 2004). It is the in-between I now turn to.

4.2.2 Tracing In-Between

Northern Ireland is a space in the middle. It is a space in the middle of violence and peace, in the middle of the Catholic community and Protestant community, in the middle of Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland. Breath, too, is in the middle. Breath ebbs and flows. Pulsates. Inhaling and exhaling. Breath is never static, but always-already in the middle of movement. From the moment of birth, we are in the middle of the practice of breathing folding in-between. Andrew James McDowell (2014) describes the middle as a margin and here breath is also active: at relational limits and margins entangling nature and culture, self and other, here and there. To become attentive to breath necessitates a movement in the middle; it necessitates a movement in-between.

Tracing begins in an aerial middle, dancing among the inside and the outside, and across mapped borders and defined territories. Tracing does not seek to plot embodied feltness in a particular space-time. It does not aim for rigid diagnosis and stable representation but seeks to add to the world through an infinite series of 'ands' (Cadman 2009) as is follows the movement of touch in-between the inside and outside, in-between thinking and practice, in-between speaking and silence, in-between the researchers body and the sensuous 'goings on', in-between the researcher and the researched, and in-between the field and non-field. A movement in-between cannot determine what or who the subject is, and what it does or does not mean to be Catholic or Protestant. Instead, breath is followed to trace the weaving of emerging relationality: to witness bodies in continual becomings; to listen-to the in-between spaces of active silence; and to sense sharable worlds and durations. Here, as has been articulated by Gillian Rose (1997: 313), research is not an activity of mapping difference – assuming visible distinctly separate agents – 'and more one of asking how difference is constituted, of tracing its destabilising emergence during the research process itself.' Tracing, then, is not the activation of a pre-formulated research plan (Reece, Harries, and McConnachie 2016; Tsing 2005), but an event moving with the unexpected as it emerges (Deleuze 1989; Hultman and Lenz Taguchi 2010). It is an ongoing practice of discovery in-between, wherein peace becomes a question of how we move with and describe extant relations in their emergence.

As an event, tracing moves with an alternative, more poetic, type of knowledge that preserves a space for the 'not-said, not-defined, not-determined' (Irigaray 2017: 66). The detailed descriptions cultivated

in adding to the world through an assemblage of ands is open and incoherent (Latham 2003). It is not the production of rigid diagnosis and stable representation but the voicing of an inarticulate and unformulated practical grasp *in* worlds (Nash 2000; Taylor 1991; Thrift 1996). Opposed to a disarticulation (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017), it is an activity of adding co-created layers that describes 'something so that it becomes thicker than it first seems' (Haraway 2000: 108). This propels the body into the midst, into the middle, where we can embrace and find value in that which remains ineffable as (strong) knowledge (Manning 2016).

Tracing cultivates 'weak' knowledge. Opposed to having meaning per se, Kathleen Stewart (2008: 74) describes weak theories as having 'force in some another form.' Weak knowledge disregards uniformity and stability to embrace fluidity and openness. Tracing moves to effect something less solid and assured but more speculative, as contradictions and complexities are not purified but held together, and alongside absences and fallibilities (Gibson-Graham 2014; Puig de la Bellacasa 2017; Rose 1997). Tracing bypasses knowing, whilst animating the very precondition for 'understanding'. It is a kind of knowledge that moves within the 'experiential register of the not-quite-yet…[keeping] actual experience open to its more-than' (Manning 2016: 29). Unlike mapping, the activity of tracing can never be complete: tracing, like breath, will always exceed. Tracing allows for the emergent and continual becoming of both the doing and telling of research, where breath, and the bodies and relations it animates, remain forever excessive, always in-between, and never settling within mapped frames, borders, or territories (Driver 2000; Nast 1998). There cannot be a final destination, only ever new relations active within the 'entangled webs we weave' (Barad 2007: 384). Tracing is the creation of a knowledge-making that is necessarily incomplete: a situated whole that has no ending.

4.2.3 A Situated Tracing

The ephemeral, excessive, and open nature of tracing does not forgo situatedness. Knowledge – weak or strong – is situated. Donna Haraway (1988: 583) introduced the term situated knowledge in a movement against the positivist notion of objectivity and relativism.[39] Arguing against universal and irresponsible knowledge, Haraway posits (1988: 589) partiality 'as the condition of being heard.' Haraway (1997: 197) articulates: 'there is no way to make a general argument outside the never-finished work of articulating the partial worlds of situated knowledges.' This is not to say stories and experience of breath and peace cannot be witnessed and told, but that this emergent and speculative telling remains engaged in a modest, always situated, process of knowledge making. Tracing embodies a methodology that, whilst not guided by a priori transcendental categories and borders, is ongoing, sensitive, partial, and *situated*.

[39] Situated knowledge has a long and broad lineage through feminist thinking. For engagements from feminist geographer see Abbas 2018, Bondi 2005, McDowell 1993, 2003, Pratt 1992, Rose 1997, Stanley and Wise 2002, Whatmore 1997, and White and Bailey 2004.

Tracing follows webs of relationality and difference within a situated spatio-temporal unfolding (Dekeyser and Garrett 2017). It is 'never a disengaged account' (Haraway 2000 160), but always 'a view from somewhere' (McDowell 1993: 312) and some time (Bradotti 1994). Knowledge that is situated takes its own specific and partial form in relation to the specificities of the space-time in which it was made (Bradotti 2010), and in relation to the participating bodies active in its making. It is not, however, simply the space, time, and participating bodies that create the situatedness of knowledge. Situatedness also arises from the active and engaged role the researcher plays in creating the field.

All knowledge is marked by the personal origins and positions of the researcher (England 1994). Within geography, Rose (1997: 309) has acutely considered the situatedness of the researcher, arguing the position of the researcher must be made visible via a double reflexive gaze: a 'reflexivity [that] looks inward to the identity of the researcher, and outward to her relation to her research and what is described as the wider world.' The motivation to study Northern Ireland is personal. Although I have been far removed from the Troubles, and Northern Ireland is not a space I am familiar with or rooted to through a linear, genealogical history, being caught between the identities of English and Irish, and searching for a space of belonging shared by these two identities, does resonate with my own 'half-Irish half-English' body. My position in-between England and Ireland and my own search for 'belonging' within these nations, particularly Ireland from which I am territorial unrooted, will undoubtedly impact the emotions, positions, biases, and assumptions I bring to this research and in ways that cannot be foreseen.[40] What is more, my body – with its Irish name, English accent, Catholic label, British institutional grounding, Irish passport and Bristol academic positioning – effects how others relate to and perceive me, particularly in the fragmented context of Northern Ireland. How my body effected the creation of the field is not, however, something that is pre-determinable, but a condition of situated relations under constant negotiation.

Geography, today, is an innately reflective discipline (Butz and Besio 2009). Yet, the impossibility of reflexivity has been widely acknowledged, both within geography and beyond. As Rose (1997: 313) articulates 'there is no transparent self waiting to be revealed.' To a degree, and particular in reference to the fundamental Catholic or Protestant and Irish or British categorisation, I could actively chose the self I presented – I could bring up my Irish heritage, my long summers spent in Cork, my Catholic upbringing or I could speak of everyday life in England, living in Bristol and Manchester or Shrewsbury, my place of birth, I could talk of my friends and family back in the United Kingdom and my frequent trips 'across the pond' to return home. However, I could not escape my Gaelic name and my English accent, and I could not control the 'truths' these held or what it meant to other bodies to be Catholic, Protestant, Irish or English. Nor could I control the internal, unconscious biases interlaced with these labels. However, the meanings of these labels are not static (Billio and Hiemstra 2013).

[40] Perceptions and assumptions influencing research are never static. Nor can they simply be situated within the researcher. Perceptions and assumptions – alongside goals, values, motivations, and the questions – shift and alter in the co-making of the field (Kirsch and Ritchie 1995).

My position did not exist in isolation (Hultman and Lens Taguchi 2010) and, neither, was it in existence prior to any encounter in the field. Throughout the fieldwork my body shifted along a spectrum of Irishness and Britishness, of researcher and participant, of skilled and amateur, of novel and familiar, of quiet and chatty, of comfortable and uncomfortable, of passive and active, of central and peripheral. Just as the bodies of participants and the emergence of difference are not plottable or mappable, neither is the researcher's body (Haraway 1988: 585). Tracing is a matter of following not only the emerging differences of participant's bodies and the differences in-between, but also the situated difference of the self as it is emerging in the locality of field. Research, then, shifts from a process of self-discovery to a relational process of self-making, following the realisation there can be no self waiting to be revealed, as the self in question 'does not exist in isolation but only through the mutually constitutive social relations' in their emergence (Rose 1997: 314). A methodology tracing in-between confronts the researcher with the realisation that both a transparently knowable self and world is an illusion, with tracing voicing the 'co-appearance and disposition of the self with self, self with other and self with world' (Ash and Simpson 2016: 58). Reflexivity cannot be animated alone but must reside in-between, with the 'I' in the situated and emerging midst.

4.3 Tracing Methods

A methodology of tracing animates novel ways of entering and engaging with the field. Despite the creativity of tracing, the methods I employed to trace breath are standard, traditional geographic methods. However, to engaged with traditional methods from a methodological movement of tracing, is to make these familiar methods 'dance a little' (Latham 2003: 2000); it is to make them creative. Attentiveness to extant relations of peace, woven through a sharing of breath, necessitates this creativity. Peace itself requires theoretical *and* epistemological creativity.

4.3.1 Textual analysis

Textual analysis is a close reading of the content, meaning, structure, and discourse of a text (Lockyer 2008). A text can comprise a number of different mediums (see Aitken 2005), yet the texts I engaged with were largely restricted to the policy agreements and frameworks of the Northern Irish Peace Process: the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, the 2005 policy document *A Shared Future: Improving relations in Northern Ireland*, the 2010 *Programme for Cohesion, Sharing and Integration*, and, the most recent policy framework, the 2014 *Together Building a United Community*. A situated reading does not approach texts in isolation but considers the texts structure, purpose, author/s, audiences, silences, temporal rooting, and political context (Aitken 2005).

James Paul Gee's (1999) articulates six different building tasks accomplished by language. The task I primarily focus upon resides in the category of activity building, whereby language is mobilised to create situated meaning in an ongoing process. The texts are read to trace how knowledge around the practice of peacebuilding is formulated, the terms and principles mobilised to inform this knowledge, and how

this knowledge is validated within peacebuilding practices and throughout society as the 'truth' of doing peace both historically and as a future projection (Dittmer 2010). Texts do not, however, hold a singular meaning but are mobilised in multiple ways (Lockyer 2008). The texts all have a life that both precedes and exceeds my reading. Thus, there is an inherent inability to completely understand a text (Saukko 2003) and, so, textual analysis remains always partial.

Textual analysis, in contrast to the other methods employed, is directed at the macro-scale. However, as I moved beyond the text (Dittmer 2010; Sayer 2000) and consider the performance and effect of the 'truth' of peace and peacebuilding contained in the documents, engagement continues to be situated at an everyday level, before once again pulling back to the macro-scale. Although perhaps not embracing the openness, excessiveness, and creativity I desired from a methodology, textual analysis provided a basis for entering the field as an informed, tactile participant.

4.3.2 The Tactile Observing Participant

Tracing animates an engagement with the field as an immersed and active 'observant participator' (Thrift 2000b).[41] Deep immersion in-field creates, what J. D. Dewsbury (2010: 327) has called, 'a portfolio of ethnographic 'exposure'' that advances the body as *the* site of 'knowledge': it animates a sensuous 'knowing' of the body-as-a-whole. The doing of fieldwork, then, necessitates 'getting one's body immersed in the field for a period of time sufficient to enable one to participate inside that culture' (Conquergood 1991: 180). Participation animates the researcher body as both the phenomenon and the subject of experience (Dewsbury 2010; Dekeyser and Garrett 2017; Manning 2016). As an immersed and active participator, I felt the movement, materiality, and relationality in breath. This is to be '*in touch* with everyday living and practices, in the proximity of involvement with ordinary material transformation' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 96, original emphasis), wherein knowing cannot be separated 'from being-relating' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 114). It is through touch, then, that we enter into relations and become an engaged, situated, and involved observing participant.

My experience of breathing in the field is detailed in a research journal or field diary. After every encounter in the field, I sat down and detailed the experience of being in that space, alongside more broad feelings and thoughts of living in Belfast. Non-coherence guided my research journal; I wrote as I participated and participated as I wrote, with words continually vibrating against and through previous, and future, participations and observations (Watson and Till 2010). The field journal voices the embodied and situated experience of participating and breathing in the field (Lorimer 2003). This voicing did not intend to 'reveal once and for all as truth what has appeared today but to sing some aspect of the real which *today* has manifest itself' (Irigaray 2004b: 34, my emphasis). Ethnography embodies the realisation 'every view is a way of seeing, not *the way*' (Wolcott 1999: 137, original

[41] Nigel Thrift flipped the traditional social scientific method of 'participant observation' to 'observant participant' in order to advance a method engaging with practice, performance, embodiment, and materiality. It is, thus, not a method privileging visual observation.

emphasis), with the research journal voicing *an* embodiment in the field. A voicing that does not reside solely in my body.

Encountering the field as an observant participant creates a culture in-between. Sarah Pink (2011: 271, original emphasis) writes how research does not reside in the collection of data about human and nonhuman research participants that is later analysed, but 'involves the production of meaning *in participation with them* through a shared activity in a shared place.' A reciprocal relation of 'touch intensifies a sense of the co-transformative' that is always-already political (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 96). The research journal voices stories that are both descriptive, in that they inscribe, and speculative, in that they connect through performances cultivating a reciprocal sharing (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017). To engage in the field as an observing participant, then, is to not simply reveal invisible relations of positive peace but to also be active – alongside the other bodies in the field and the field itself – in breathing peaceful relations. Co-creation shifts from monologue and information to dialogue and communication (Conquergood 1991), as we speak-with, listen-to, and act-together (Wall 2006). The research journal becomes a shared space, voicing a 'polylogue' encompassing the researcher, the researched, and the situated space-time (Anderson, Adey, and Bevan 2010: 598). Co-production makes the research journal a space of risk challenging theoretical, methodological, and personal preconceptions (Dewsbury 2010; Massey 2003; Whatmore 2003), while the making of questions, motivations, and values driving the research exceed a single body.

The many voices of the research journal are mirrored by the multiple listening-to in its continual re-reading. Back from Belfast, I was faced with the task of working through the mountain of 'data' I had collected in the field. I had no idea where to start. I felt lost and confused. I had no direction and the questions I was asking, the questions that had propelled my movement towards Belfast, towards peace, and towards breath, were distant. I had spent a year being-with Belfast. I had been immersed and engaged. However, as the year progressed, the central aim and focus of this engagement became blurred. I had followed breath, yet I had followed it without direction, without a map. The continual question projected from Bristol was 'are you getting what you need?' but I had no idea what I needed, let alone if I had 'captured' it. After a lot of stalling, I returned to the middle and I read, read, and re-read the research journal (alongside the interview transcripts). I listened-to the polylogue spoken and began to hear the questions, the values, the passions, and the motivations that moved through the pages and with the embodied, relational, and situated voices of the field and the bodies active within it. Whilst it is my voice weaving questions, descriptions, and motivations together, they do not solely belong to me. They arose in the field, in the relations and spaces as they were emerging, and with every re-reading they continue in their emergence.

4.3.3 An Interview Story

Mirroring the co-creation of ethnography, interviews are a research method in which participants are encountered within a shared space and together, in-between researcher and participant, an active

dialogue is invented. This dialogue is the telling of a story, in which meaning is created and performed. The interviews I conducted were all unstructured. With the Troubles forming the backdrop to contemporary Northern Irish life, from a sensitive and ethical perspective, the parameters of the conversation were largely drawn by the interview participants. Consequently, some conversations narrated life-stories in their breath and, so, resembled a life-history interview, while other conversations were a telling of stories situated within the space of Turas. The minimal structure gave participants the space, time, and breath to organically create the narrative in their own words (Adriansen 2012): they held the power to determine what information was voiced and how it was given meaning and emotion (Jackson and Russell 2010). Although I provided prompts and direction, by enfolding fact and experience in a dialogue of storying, the interviews created space for contingency and agency within larger phenomena that may structure or limit but cannot determine. The contextual, everyday focus, and the narrator's self-freedom animates a dialogue for understanding how bodies are situated in spaces, relations, and ecologies, which themselves are continually exceeding what is.

Life history interviews, and I would argue this extends to interviews in their breadth, must be mobilised in their unity (Connell 2010). The researcher respects the narrative's unity by remaining faithful to the context, materiality, and embodiment of participants' words, and the meanings they are imbued with, throughout the interview's entirety. The analysis, then, draws directly from the words of interviewees and, where possible, situates the context and materiality using the interviewee's own words and stories. Presenting interviews in their unity does not, however, instil harmony. Narratives are not homogenous but spaces of deliberative, if unconscious, contradiction, and fragmentation created in relation to participants own desires, needs, and limitations. This potentially gives voice to multiple, dynamic, and contingent becomings that cannot be mobilised as truth or fact. Rather, interviews are the co-production of a shared understanding across disparate perspectives woven into speculative and precarious stories that help to make experience intelligible (Valentine and Sadgrove 2014). They are, thus, encounters necessitating silence.

Although narrative storying often resembles a monologue, communication requires two bodies in an active relation, free from appropriation by either interviewee or interviewer. Relational dialogue does not fix the other in a static identity, but listens-to entangling narratives and extant differences as they emerge in the story. Carrie Hamilton states (2008: 37), the golden rule for the researcher using interviews is 'to listen and keep one's mouth shut.' This does not make the researcher passive, but rather places them in the active space of silence. Silence is not the acknowledgement of meaning already coded for the transmission of 'knowledge', but a listening-to of the still unspoken words of the other, to his or her specific difference touching upon the sensing body. The interviewer must be open to the sensible and tactile, if at times uncomfortable, touch of the narrative – to the materiality of words as they caress the body in their rhythm, emotion, intensities, vibrations, tone, and silences. Touch draws the researcher into the narrative in a relational movement beyond their autonomous control.

Communication and dialogue continue in the activity of transcription[42] and the continual re-reading of interview scripts. Re-reading is an emerging encounter. It brings the researcher, once again, into extant relations and experiences in-between different bodies and concepts. Such a re-reading requires the deployment of the whole body and all the body's affective perceptions. Crucially, this is not about over-coming the in-field events. It is an entirely new event, emerging out of the situated activity of reading and reading again (Hultman and Lenz Taguchi 2010). What emerges in the active process of re-reading, and so what I seek to tell, are entangled poetic stories.

4.3.4 Making Poetic Stories

> *I like the in-betweenness of up and down, of being on the earth and of the heavens. I think that's where poetry should dwell, between the dream world and the given world, because you don't just want photography, and you don't want fantasy either.*
>
> (Seamus Heaney 2008 in Heaney and Kim 2008: n.p.)

This thesis is, first and foremost, a story. This story traces breath through the interweaving of archival readings, practices of breathing and spaces of breath, the telling of interviews, the halting of interruptions, the feltness of respites, and the vignettes of participation and touch. Veronica della Dora (2009: 337) writes: 'geographers are nothing but storytellers.' The geographic engagement with stories largely stems from the recent creative turn (see de Leeuw and Hawkins 2017; Eshun and Madge 2016; Hawkins 2019; Madge 2014; Marston and de Leeuw 2013). This has promoted a profusion of thinking and doing around creative methodologies, within which performative 'telling' has been prominent (Lorimer and Parr 2014). Acutely, geography has advanced a telling of small stories (see Lorimer 2003, 2006; Short and Godfrey 2007; Naylor 2008; Cameron 2012), engaging with the local, the situated, the specific, the intimate, the embodied, the mundane, and the particular as it is lived in everyday life. Small stories entangle detailed description with the process of making. Emilie Cameron (2012: 574) writes: 'stories express something irreducible particular and personal, and yet they can be received as expressions of border social and political context, and their telling can move, affect and produce collectives.' Storying, then, is both situated and politically transformative.

The revival of the story, and creative writing broadly, views language as 'more than (just) representational' (Parr and Steveson 2014: 566). Manning (2016: 42) has argued new research methods are not needed. Rather, we need to re-account 'what writing can do in the process of thinking-doing' – storying begins to cultivate this re-accounting. Stories are meaningful performances that affectively do work. As Deleuze and Guattari (1994: 176) illustrate: 'the writer twists language, makes it vibrate, seizes hold of it and rends it in order to wrest percept from perceptions, the affect from affection, the sensation

[42] All recorded interviews were transcribed. Ten of the interviews were transcribed by an outsourced transcription service, whilst I transcribed the remaining interviews. Unrecorded interviews and chance conversation were written up as soon as was possible. Following transcription, interviews were coded to inform the emerging analysis. Transcripts were coded into broad key themes by hand three times, with there being a total of thirty-two codes.

from opinion.' Geographical storying seeks to induce feeling and affect, generate emotions, play with description, and carve differences of potential; it seeks to advance the story as a significant event in itself (Lorimer and Parr 2014). Storying breath does not decenter the humanness of an encounter, the presence of the body through which breath moves is not removed, but stories are composed from multiple bodies and materialites that cannot solely be reduced to the human or representational. The stories presented, then, are multilayered, complex, and complicated (Clark 2003; Mann 2014). They are a partial, open, and modest telling of relations and encounters without beginning or ending (Wright et al. 2012) and, so, irreducible 'to the concept of narrative' (Cameron 2011: 5). Stories are voiced by the phenomena they seek to tell, as the body is drawn to unknown, speculative places (Rose 2006). This creative redefinition continues as stories affect those who read them.

The small stories told throughout this thesis are always situated. They do, however, move in-between imagination and 'fact' (Peterle 2019). Situated in the middle, they voice a more poetic style of prose that is open, fluid, colourful, relational, material, and rhythmic. Poetic telling does not immobilise but 'return[s] each living being to its becoming, with a respect for its blossoming' (Irigaray 2004b: 34). Rather than absolute and totalising knowledge, the incoherence and openness of poetic writing compels the imagination, as the reader or listener moves in-between the lines, exploring the many becomings. Poetic crafting embodies the openness, fluidity, and ambiguity of tracing as to write poetically is to write with a paintbrush, it is not to confine thought to what is black and white but to embrace the swirling colours of coherent-incoherence, which can never be held in a mapped stasis.

To write stories with a paintbrush is to move with a generous telling, wherein the colour of ambiguity and partiality is embraced in favour of definiteness, absoluteness, and completeness. The following section details the empirical spaces I engaged with as an observing participant. At times, this engagement was animated through a volunteering role. The distinction between volunteer and researcher often becomes blurred with both informing the other (Goerisch 2017). I sought to be a volunteer who was compassionate, caring, respectful, involved, engaged, active, present, and responsive. Embodying this position, which was firmly grounded in my methodological approach, fostered a responsibility, loyalty, and attachment to the spaces I was participating in; spaces that cared for me whilst I was living in Belfast. This responsibility and loyalty, in turn, implicated and informed my evolving position, practice, and ethics as a researcher. The telling I voice, then, is formed by the prolonged, reciprocal, evolving, and caring relationships with and beyond research spaces and participants (Blazek and Askins forthcoming).

The stories I tell are voiced with a 'reciprocating kindness' (Zhang 2017: 147). This reciprocal kindness moves with generosity and care for the empirical spaces and the bodies and relations active within them. Reciprocal kindness creates an ethical strategy mitigating the non-beneficial aspects of research (Blazek and Askins forthcoming), as the researcher remains with the tension of multiple allegiances and loyalties – to the self, to the space, to academia, to the participants and their lived experience, and to responsibility of volunteering (Huisman 2008) – and chooses, with consideration and care, what stories

to tell and what stories to leave untold. This thesis weaves together situated, open, incomplete, and messy stories through a generous, kind, and caring telling that is reciprocal. Although I chose what stories to tell and not to tell, both the stories told and the stories left untold are not mine. They are stories 'belonging' to every body active in their making and every body continuing this making in the re-reading. This thesis is the voicing of stories that continue in reciprocal movement; it is a story with life and vitality but also one of care, generosity, and kindness. It is a story that breathes.

4.4 Empirical Spaces

Whilst Belfast remains highly segregated, throughout the city pockets of sharing can be found. Encounters have generally been thought as fleeting, casual, un-designed, momentary, passing, and ephemeral chance meetings (Wilson 2017a). Although contested, there is concern a preoccupation with the fleeting has overridden the value of the encounter (Amin 2002; Clayton 2009; Matejskova and Leitner 2011; Valentine and Sadgrove 2012; Wilson 2017a). Thus, calls for engagements with more 'sustained' forms of relation have been voiced (Matejskova and Leitner 2011). Sustained encounters attend to the 'enduring rhythms in a particular public space that are produced and developed via the interactions of its users over time, as opposed to its purported serendipitous, ephemeral, and extraordinary nature' (Teo and Neo 2017: 1108). Spaces of sustained encounter are not engineered through large-scale events but created within 'micro-publics of everyday social contact and encounter,' to animate purposefully organised group activity (Amin 2002: 959). In spaces of encounter the embodied act of breathing animates moments of sharing as the self and other come together to talk, play sport, sing, dance, entertain, move, and socialise. Here, peace-making is often felt in the tender and 'shared expressions – and affects – of nurture, love, compassion, friendship, and care' (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018: 86). These peaceful gestures bring together a variety of people, from a broad range of backgrounds, in a destabilising emergence of difference and dissensus that ruptures fixed patterns of contact and creates new peaceful ways of being in relation (Amin 2002).

There is a need to engage with spaces of sharing in Northern Ireland and tracing breath, as a vector holding relationality and autonomous self-differentiation in tension, can animate this required engagement. Some of these spaces are designed and created with the specific aim of cultivating peace and creating the momentum for reconciliation. Other, however, are spaces of fun, learning, laughter, exercise, wellbeing, friendship and passion before, or even if, they can be considered peaceful spaces; it is principally these latter spaces I am most interested in – everyday spaces in which the ordinary can be grappled with but not generalised from. It is this interest that led me Turas.

4.4.1 Empirical Space: Turas Irish Language Project

The Irish language has a long and contentious history on the island of Ireland and, acutely, in Northern Ireland. Whilst rarely a root cause of conflict (Laitin 2000), language is often mobilised as a source of cultural antagonism that can be both injurious and sustaining to the very presence of the language

(McMonagle 2010). Cultural antagonism originates not with the communication function of a language, but with the capacity for language to act at an essential essence of communal identity and, in turn, group belonging. In spaces of ethno-national violence language is employed as a secular symbol of nationalism (Pritchard 2004), which remains active even when the language 'is not, or no longer, widely used in everyday communication' (Edwards 1985: 110). The history of colonialism and Anglicisation, alongside a modern nationalist political and cultural narrative, has imbued the Irish language with acute symbolic significance that has been employed by both sides of the community to insight cultural antagonism (Mitchell and Miller 2019). A capacity that remains within the language today.

Prior to Ireland being claimed by the English Crown under the Act of Union 1801, the Irish language was the main vernacular of the island of Ireland. Under a new United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland a process of centralisation ensued (McMonagle 2010). The dominance of English as the elite language of commerce, politics, administration and modernity and the tongue of convenience and opportunity prompted a rapid decline of Gaelic across Ireland, as the value of the language diminished. Gaelic was soon labelled as 'backwards' and became closely 'associated with poverty and struggle' (Pritchard 2004: 64). The dualistic characterisation of the two languages was internalised by many Irish speakers who, conscious of the need for their children to learn English due to the opportunities it afforded, soon abandoned the Irish language. English prevailed with only secluded pockets of Irish speaking areas, known as Gaeltacht, mapped across of the island of Ireland. The Gaeltacht developed their own dialectical variants of Gaelic and, by the twentieth century, there were three major Irish language dialects that persist in their differences today: Ulster Irish spoken in County Donegal and Northern Ireland; Munster Irish found in County Kerry on the south west coast of Ireland and predominantly within the Dingle Peninsula; and Connaught Irish located predominantly in County Galway and County Mayo, also on the west coast.

With the success of Irish independence in 1922, a radical divergence towards the language emerged. The newly created Irish Free State maintained an ideological dedication to the language (McMonagle and McDermott 2014). Alongside a compulsory role in education (McMonagle 2010) and a requirement for working in the civil service (Mitchell and Miller 2019). Irish was established as the 'national' and 'first official' language of this new nation, which further cemented the historical narrative tying the language to the desire for, and achievement of, ending British rule. The English language was recognised as the 'second official' language and most government business continued to be conducted in English.

While the south of Ireland renewed their commitment to the Irish language, in the newly created, Protestant-dominated, pro-British state of Northern Ireland the Irish language became 'lingua non-grata' (McMonagle and McDermott 2014). Britishness was institutionalised across the six counties of the North and the Irish language became firmly associated with the 'foreign' Republic and Catholic minority, who were regarded as subversive and disloyal. In the North, the Irish language was not granted official recognition or support. It was 'banned in the Stormont parliament, from road signs, and from broadcasts

(Mitchell and Miller 2019: 240). Today, the Irish language constitutes the lesser-used language in both the Republic and Northern Ireland but, as a strong marker of national identity, its status in Northern Ireland remains highly contentious (McMonagle and McDermott 2014).

Current perceptions of the Irish language in the North are largely framed through the Troubles. After partition, a grassroots activism maintained the presence of Irish language in the North which, following the beginning of the Troubles, was invigorated as culture and heritage became viewed as political capital. Within the first decade of the Troubles, the Irish language seemed to be in serious decline. Then, in HM Prison Maze (formerly Long Kesh Detention centre) a group of Republican prisoners, led by the infamous Bobby Sands who had been elected Officer Commanding of the Provisional IRA prisoners, embarked upon high-profile hunger strikes in October 1980 that continued into 1981 (Pritchard 2004). These prisoners, as a matter of policy, conversed in Irish, a phenomenon that became known as 'Jailtacht'.

During the Troubles, Sinn Féin and the IRA invigorated the Irish language as cultural capital and mobilised it as a loaded weapon. Nationalists and Republicans viewed speaking *as Gaelige* as a political act, contributing to the quest of ending foreign rule in Ireland: '...it is our contention that each individual who masters the learning of the Irish language has made an important personal contribution towards the re-conquest of Ireland' (Sinn Féin 1984: 2). The learning of Irish became inculcated as a political act alongside the claim that 'as the Irish influences rises, foreign influence decreases' (Pritchard 2004: 75). In 1984, Sinn Féin stated:

> …what we are aiming at…[is] the recovery of our own roots and the ending of the feeling of alienation produced by having in our mouth the language imposed on us by imperialism (Sinn Féin 1984: 6).

Mobilising the Irish language within their combined military and electoral strategy, Republicans explicitly modelled their cause 'on Irish cultural nationalism…and the discourse of decolonisation' (Nic Craith 2003: 79, see also O'Reilly 1999). The mobilisation of Irishness among the Republican movement – epitomised in their fervent use of the Irish language – was viewed with suspicion from the Protestant community. It was believed the act of embedding Irishness in Northern Ireland and within its people would lead to increased support for a united Ireland, as those who spoke the language would soon come to feel and be Irish.

Ireland's struggle for independence, accompanied by an increasing and prevailing sectarianism, acutely and unambiguously entwined Gaelic with Irish nationalism and Catholicism which, in turn, entrenched Unionist opposition to the language (McMonagle and Mc Dermott 2014). The Irish language became a

synonymous symbolic marker of Irish national identity preserved exclusively for the Catholic natives.[43,44] For many Protestants, the association of the language with their political opponents served to inculcate the language as both alien and threatening to their way of life (Mitchell and Miller 2019; Pritchard 2004). Sarah McMonagle and Philip McDermott (2014: 248) articulate:

> …a binary of blame has arisen where republicans blame the British state for the demise of the language in the first place, while unionists point to the active promotion by republicans of Irish in a politicized manner that is seemingly hostile to the existence of the Northern Ireland state.

The impetus for the revival of the Irish language was largely political. Yet, the momentum for the revival was located within the Catholic working-class district of west Belfast. This district was homogeneous in terms of religious affiliation and political outlook: nearly all its residents were Nationalist and, although divided between constitutional Nationalist and militant Republicans, it was the latter who had an acute presence in the area (McCoy 1997).

Today, the presence of the Irish language continues to be overwhelmingly confined to Catholic territory. Catholic west Belfast is home to the 'Gaeltacht Quarter' or '*An Cheathrú Ghaeltachta*'. The Gaeltacht Quarter aims to promote the Irish language and Irish culture. It is home to many Irish-medium institutions and hosts a variety of Irish cultural festivals throughout the year. Most businesses in the area have Irish language or bilingual signage and all street names are displayed in Irish. In addition, Belfast's only Irish radio station, Raidió Fáilte ('Welcome Radio'), resides in west Belfast. With the Irish language firmly embedded in west Belfast and inherited narratives continuing to voice the Irish language as a Republican language, in the post-conflict period the Protestant community remains geographically, culturally, and ideologically alienated from Gaelic, or at least that was the case until Turas opened in 2012.

In 2012 an Irish language project was set up at East Belfast Mission in the Skainos Centre, in Protestant east Belfast. East Belfast Mission is a charity organisation affiliated with the Methodist Christ of Ireland Church that works with the east Belfast community to assist in its renewal and regeneration (East Belfast Mission n.d.). Turas, meaning journey or pilgrimage in Irish Gaelic, is the only known Irish language project based in a traditionally Unionist area aiming to engage and provide an education in *Gaelig*e (Ulster dialect) to learners from a Protestant background. In the Skainos Centre, Turas comprises of an office, storage room, and two classrooms on the second floor of the building. In 2017 Turas employed two members of staff full time, one member of staff part time, and six teachers on an hourly basis. It also

[43] Irish language interpellations tied religion, nationality and language into a single identity: Sasanach is a term referring to both an Englishman and an Anglican; the term Albanach refers simultaneously to a Scottish person and a Presbyterian; a Gall was at once a foreigner, an English speaker, and a Protestant; and to use the word Gael was to speak concurrently of a Catholic, an Irish speaker, or an Irishman/woman (McCoy 1997).

[44] Despite Unionists complete rejection of the language, there are close historic links between Protestantism and the Irish language. Gordon McCoy (1997) outlines three primary areas of Protestant engagement with the Irish language: proselytism, antiquarianism, and romantic revivalism. These three arenas, however, were underpinned by a rhetoric anglicising or neutralising the history and roots of Gaelic and, relatedly, often worked within a continuing colonial framework. Consequently, Protestant engagement with the language has tended to enforce the nationalist discourse (see McCoy 1997; McMonagle 2010) and, in turn, fuel Unionist suspicion and fear of Gaelic.

has the support of several volunteers throughout the week, with some volunteers helping daily and being integral to the successful running of Turas.

In the academic year 2017/18 Turas offered twelve Irish language classes a week. The Irish language classes range across all levels, from total beginners to advanced classes, whist also offering conversation classes, a family class, a reading class, and an exam class (see figure 7). In addition, Turas runs a tin whistle class, a children's Irish dancing class, a set dancing class for adults, an Irish language choir and, from September 2018, a Welsh language class and an Irish yoga class. Whilst the language classes are free, asking simply for a suggested donation of £1.00 per class, the dancing and musical classes range from £3.00-£4.00 per session. Throughout the year there is a traditional music session on the second Friday of every month, and periodic talks and workshops exploring the historic links between Protestants and the Irish language, and the relevance of the Irish language in present day Northern Ireland. In addition to internally organised talks, Turas often invites external speakers, hosts public discussion on issues of identity and language, and holds one-off events including organised walks, intensive Irish language days, and theatre and music performances. Every year Turas takes part in East Belfast Mission's annual celebration for Burns Night and Belfast's St. Patrick's Day Parade. Furthermore, Turas organises trips for its learners to west Belfast and to the Gaeltacht areas in Donegal and Kerry.

Figure. 7. The range of Irish language classes ran by Turas 2016/17 (personal communication).

As of April 2017, the total number of learners Turas had registered for a language class was 173. Of the 173 learners, 46% (111 learners) came from a Protestant background, 32% (56 learners) from a Catholic background, and 3% (6 learners) were identified as other. 46% of the learners reside in East Belfast where the Skainos Centre is located, 26% (46 learners) lived in the rest of Belfast, whilst 28% (48 learners) came from outside of Belfast. Of the 173 learners, 40% (70 learners) were male and 60% (103 learners) were female. For the academic year 2016-2017 a total of 519 language classes were offered, with an average class size of 8.19. The size of the language classes tends to depend on the level, with the beginners' classes being larger than the more advanced classes. For the academic year 2018-2019, thirty-nine new learners attended the evening beginners' class and thirty attended the beginners' morning class. The number of those attending tends to ebb and flow throughout the year, with the summer term tending to reflect a fall in attendance.

Whilst in Belfast I attended two Irish language classes a week. Both the classes I attended were total beginners' classes, with one being on a Monday from 10am to midday and the other on a Tuesday evening from 7pm-9pm. I also attended the weekly choir practice, which ran on a Tuesday evening from 6pm-7pm. I joined the two classes a third of the way through the academic year, at the beginning of 2017. Although this did result in me being slightly behind and missing some of the basics, it was common for new people to join throughout the year. As the Monday class was during the day, most of the learners tended to be retired. The Tuesday evening class, in contrast, tended to attract people who were still working with most learners being middle aged. Both classes took place in the bigger of the two classrooms, with the singing class taking place in the office. The classes I attended were taught by different *múinteoirí* (teachers). The Monday morning teacher was brought up in a Protestant area and now lived in east Belfast, whilst the Tuesday night teacher was from a well-known Republican family and, thus, had territorial roots firmly grounded in west Belfast. The two teachers had different teaching styles. The Monday morning class tended to be very methodical. We would often begin the two-hour class recapping the vocabulary we had learnt the previous week, before being presented a series of handouts that would map the trajectory of this week's lesson. Thus, we were often visibly presented with the *Gaelige* (Irish) and *Béarla* (English), with there being a considerable amount of emphasis on written Gaelic, particularly as the year progressed. In contrast, the Tuesday evening class focused on rote learning and the class tended to be based around verbal repetition, with very little attention given to the written word. With the new 2017-2018 academic year, I stopped attending the Tuesday night class. Most of the learners who had been attending this class moved into the intermediate class and a new beginners class started. Instead of moving into the intermediate class, I was asked to help with the family class on a Wednesday and stay around on a Wednesday evening to prepare the tea and coffee for the *sos* (break) and lock up after the advanced evening class.

The family class, which ran from 4.30pm-5.30pm, was a class that allowed parents and children to learn Irish together. On average there would be six 'families' attending. Each family had one adult and from one to three children. Whilst most families tended to be a mother and children, there was one father who

attended with his three children, two grandmothers who brought their granddaughters, and one mother brought her daughter and two of her daughter's friends. Some of the adults attending were fluent in Irish and/or attended adult classes at Turas, while others were completely new to the language. The family class was taught by a young lady and the approach was grounded in rote learning, with a large emphasis on the spoken word learnt through song and games such as 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' and 'Simon Says'. At times, arts and crafts would also be incorporated into the family class.

Halfway through a two-hour language class there would be *sos*, where the class would break for tea and coffee (juice and hot chocolate for the family class) and biscuits. The Monday morning class and family class tended to have *sos* in the room where the class was taking place. On Tuesday evenings, tea and biscuits would be in the corridor between the two classrooms, allowing the beginners class to mix with the concurrent intermediate class. Depending on the class, *sos* tended to last between fifteen minutes and half an hour. This time provided an opportunity for learners to get to know each other and to ask any questions they had which had not been addressed in the lesson. At the end of each class a bag would be placed at the front of the class, for people to donate if they wished.

In addition to attending language classes, I also volunteered one day a week with Turas. As a volunteer, I was responsible for several different tasks including preparing tea and coffee for the language classes, helping out in the family class, collating information on learners and class statistics, assisting with funding applications, designing posters for the two classrooms, and helping organise the various one-off events. Over the course of the year that I was in Belfast, I attended several of the talks Turas organised, assisted with the one-day intensive language course, paraded with Turas in the St. Patrick's Day Parade (see figure 8), participated in a panel arranged for a local youth group discussing Turas and the Irish Language Act, and sang with the Turas Choir at several internal and external events, including at the East Belfast Mission's Burns Night.

My ethnographic engagement with Turas was supported by sixteen in-depth, unstructured interviews. A call for interview participants was sent out to all members of Turas via email and the interviews were conducted over the course of six months. Most of the interviews took place in one of the classrooms at Turas or in the community café in the Skainos building, generally prior to or after a language class. However, two of the interviews took place in coffee shops in different parts of Belfast, and one in the workplace of the participant. The interviews ranged in length, with the shortest being an hour and the longest closer to two and a half hours. All the interviews, except one, were recorded and two of the participants, a married couple, were interviewed together. Three of the interview participants were employed members of Turas, and several the other interviewees volunteered at Turas in addition to taking classes. Participants ranged from very new learners, who had only been attending classes for a few weeks, to advanced learners who would be considered as fluent. Thus, the participants attended the range of different language classes offered by Turas. Six of the interview participants were male. All the participants were from Northern Ireland, bar one participant who was from Donegal and one

participant who was from Dublin. Whilst there were three younger participants (in their thirties), the rest of the participants were over fifty-five years of age. Due to the unstructured nature of the interviews a range of topics were covered. Thus, some interviews were closely focused on the Irish language and Turas, whereas others used Turas as an entry point to discuss their experience of the wider context of

Figure. 8. Turas walking in the St. Patrick's Day Parade in Belfast, 17th March 2017 (personal communication).

Northern Ireland. These latter interviews much more closely resembled a life history interview and were acutely framed by the Troubles and its legacy. However, in general, most interviews discussed the experience of learning Irish, including the space of Turas and how they had first come to attend the classes offered, the impact of engaging with the Irish language, and the Irish language in a boarder context. In addition to the interviews with learners engaged in the Turas project, I interviewed an ex-Republican Irish language activist who is a member of the Commission on Flags, Identity, Culture and Tradition. This man was a former Republic prisoner jailed in Long Kesh. He learnt Gaelic in Jail and, today, is a prominent local community activist and spokesperson for the Bogside, in his home city Derry.

4.4.2 Empirical Space: The Centre for Troubles Studies*

Prior to moving to Belfast, I contacted the Centre for Troubles Studies (CTS*) after having come across them through desk-based research looking into the voluntary and community sector. The CTS* is an independent, not for profit organisation working on and around issues relating to conflict, human rights, social transformation, and social justice. Originating in 1996, the majority of the CTS*'s work falls into six categories: art of conflict transformation, research, training, community development, mediation, and internal peace work. The CTS* also provides advice, support, and assistance to students and independent researchers visiting Northern Ireland and, aware of this, I contacted their director and first met with him in June 2016. During our meeting, I expressed my desire to have a space in Belfast to work from and it was agreed I could have a desk three days a week in the CTS* office. Before long, first as an unpaid intern and then as a research assistant, I was involved in a significant part of the work carried out by the CTS*.

The CTS*'s conflict transformation work tends to be directed towards community-based women's groups located across Belfast and further afield.[45] The women's groups recruited for peacebuilding work vary, with some groups being very well established and others being very new. Therefore, the level of organisation and previous involvement in the community-voluntary sector differs from group to group. Women's groups embark on a designated programme or on an amalgamation of programmes, usually dependent upon the stream and source of funding under which the programme is run. A large proportion of the CTS*'s peacebuilding work centres around cross-community contact, which it constructs in two ways. First, by bringing together groups aligning to different sides of Northern Ireland's two opposing communities in joint up activities and programmes (Cochrane and Dunn 2002). Secondly, spaces of contact are constructed by crossing territorial and cultural boundaries. This brings groups into areas and into contact with cultures traditionally regarded as belonging to the other. The latter moves beyond physical face-to-face contact and brings the other into a close encounter without the other being tangibly present or completely visible (Wilson 2017a). The CTS*'s peacebuilding work has drawn funding from several different bodies including the European Union's PEACE programme, the National Lottery, the Northern Ireland Executive, Co-operation Ireland, the Ards and North Down Borough Council, the Community Relations Council, Belfast City Council, and the Victims and Survivors Service.

A large proportion of the work the CTS* were engaged in during 2017 was funded through Co-operation Ireland. Established in 1979 as Co-operation North, Co-operation Ireland is an all-island peacebuilding charity working 'to encourage and promote interaction, dialogue and practical

[45] On the 31st October 2000, almost a century of feminist peace activity and scholarship was recognised in the unanimous adoption of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325, which signalled an unprecedented international recognition of gender issues and support for local women's peacebuilding roles (Hammond-Callaghan 2010: Jarman 2016). With international recognition of the unique capacity of women to contribute to reconciliation and conflict transformation from their position of family carers and civil activists (Porter 2003), women's groups quickly became a legitimate and productive space for cultivating peace and attracting funding.

collaboration within Northern Ireland and between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland' (Co-operation Ireland n.d.). Co-operation (2017: 3) Ireland run a programme called the 'Circle of Learning'.

> The Circle of Learning Programme is a networking and capacity building programme which aims to impact learning and build confidence in marginalised communities across Northern Ireland in order to increase a sense of belonging and encourage places and spaces that are safe for all.

The programme consisted of four hubs across Northern Ireland and the CTS* were brought on-board as the host organisation for the Belfast hub. The hub brought together four different women's groups, all facing continuing challenges relating to the legacy of the conflict, from across and just outside of Belfast. Involvement for two of the groups centred upon separate strategic planning residential weekends. The other two groups embarked on a more prolonged programme drawing on one of the CTS*'s training packages, which I had a direct hand in facilitating.

The CTS*'s peacebuilding work is principally run through a range of internally developed training packages, developed in response to the vision of peace and peacebuilding as conceived in the Executive's TBUC strategy. The training package in question focusses on resilience. Through holistic techniques and the arts, participants explore and develop personal, often embodied, tools of self-care and their own potential for change. The programme seeks:

> …to build capacity and confidence by helping participants to notice their own spheres of influence, how they build resilience, identify positive networks and understand good decision making to aid their coming to term with the legacy of the past and to build a more positive future (personal communication).

Elements of the training package were incorporated into a specifically designed, unique programme that met the objectives of Co-operation Ireland's Circle of Learning Programme. The holistic resilience component of the programme consisted of a wellbeing workshop run by an external wellbeing company, and the arts-based component was a silk painting workshop in which the women designed and painted a silk banner around the theme of womanhood and sisterhood (see figure 9).

In addition to the work with Co-operation Ireland, I also facilitated elements of a training package that directly sought to deal with the legacies of the Troubles. The programme, once again developed by the CTS*, runs as either a 32-hour, 48-hour, or 96-hour programme focussed upon addressing the legacies of Northern Ireland's troubled past and creating shared communities through individual, community, and societal changes. The training programme is OCN accredited, meaning although the programme is designed and owned by the CTS*, it is accredited by a nationally recognised, external awarding organisation, which ratifies the high standard of the training (OCN NI 2019). The programme aims to dispel sectarian myths and provide spaces for critical discussion on both a single identity and cross-community basis about a range of issues including sectarianism, segregation, faith, and ethno-national division. It entails site visits to both public and private historical and cultural spaces (see figure 10), which are drawn together in a series of classroom sessions, where participants work through several different exercises designed to stimulate dialogue around the legacies of the past, the manifestation of these

Figure. 9. Ladies silk painting as part of the CTS's CARE training package (author's own, 13th April 2017).*

legacies today, and the possible means by which these legacies can be addressed. At the end of the training programme, and after assessing the accompanying work booklet, the participants are awarded an OCN NI Endorsed Course Certificate that recognises their achievement in completing the course.

Figure. 10. A site visit as part of the CTS's training package addressing the legacies of the Troubles, wherein the ladies visited Crumlin Road Jail in north Belfast on a bitterly cold winters day (author's own, 2nd February 2017).*

The CTS* is a small team. In 2017, the CTS* employed six full-time members of staff engaged in work across the breadth of the organisation, in addition to the director and the administration manager who both worked on a part-time basis. The CTS*'s peacebuilding work is primarily designed, organised, and facilitated by Jasmine and Lauren.[46] Together Jasmine and Lauren devise the CTS*'s peacebuilding training programmes and seek funding to run them. Lauren often oversees the day-to-day logistical organisation of the programmes, but generally both Jasmine and Lauren are active in delivering the programmes. It was, thus, Jasmine and Lauren I worked most closely with.

In addition to facilitating more prolonged training programmes, I assisted with the running of one-off events including an International Women's Day brunch (see figure 11), an evening with the Ulster Orchestra, and an outreach visit around the Synagogue in Belfast (see figure 12), a trip to Rita Duffy's Soften the Border' installation in Belcoo, Fermanagh (see figure 13). As part of the Back to the Future training programme, I curated a portrait exhibition exploring a sense of place along the Ards Peninsula (see figure 14), which was exhibited as part of the John Hewitt Summer School 2017. The CTS* were involved in a re-imaging project, which sought to work with residents and a local artist to redesign offensive murals, and I ran one of the relating consultation sessions. Working with the CTS* provided invaluable exposure into the everyday activities of peacebuilding work in the community and voluntary sector, whilst also providing a space for meeting women involved in this conflict transformation and reconciliation work.

Figure. 11. CTS's International Women's Day Brunch event pamphlet setting forth the programme of the morning and detailing the importance of the event (author's own).*

[46] Jasmine offered to put me in touch with the Northern Ireland Executive's Director of Good Relations, who kindly agreed to be interviewed. In addition, through Jasmine, I met with an active member of the Orange Order, who conducts private tours around the north Belfast Orange Hall for the CTS*. I had a quick tour of the Orange Hall and then the interview took place. It was Jasmine who also put me in contact with the Irish language activist.

Figure. 12. Outreach visit to Belfast's Jewish Synagogue (author's own, 23rd October 2017).

Figure. 13. Day visit to Rita Duffy's Softening the Border installation in Belcoo. Several of the ladies had participated in a workshop with Rita Duffy where they had made soft border pebbles (author's own, 12th August 2017).

Jane McComb
Portaferry, *Gazing at the Bible*

Bagpipe Music
"It's no go the Herring Board,
it's not go the Bible,
All we want is a packet of fags
when our hands are idle."

Catherine Coffey
Portavogie, *The Watching Blind-Eyed Fisherman*

Thalassa
"By a high star our course is set
Our end is life. Put out to sea."

Nuala McKnight
Portaferry, *My Knitted Teddy Bear*

Valedication
"I cannot deny my past to which my self is wed,
The woven figure cannot undo its thread."

Jane McComb
Portavogie, *The Fishermen's Swagger*

The Hebrides
"When men go out fish, no one must say 'Good Luck'."

Sarah McClements
Cloughey, *Rescued Dog*

Wolves
"Finding pathos in dogs."

Jane McComb
Portaferry, *The Fishermen of Portaferry*

Train to Dublin
"And I give you the sea."

Figure. 14. A Sense of Place exhibition booklet. The ladies worked with a local artist to capture aspects of the social, maritime, and agricultural legacy of the Ards Peninsula (author's own).

Respite: Tracing the Movement of Breath

You are always there and, although I often do not notice, you are forever touching upon my body. Unremembered, forgotten, invisible. Yet always felt. You move in and out, from the internal to the external and back again. Over and over; in and out, out and in. You defy boundaries and diffuse partitions. A movement tending towards the cheery tree, advancing a wondrous call. An invisible air swirling, spiralling, and pirouetting in the void in-between bodies and worlds. You are the weaving of relations. You fold in-between and attunement to the present; to this present relation. An amplification.

You are the birth of openness and of discovery. An interruption, a pause, and a gasp that calls habit into question. You are making of a new story unheard in noise. You are active-passivity, gifting an attentive responsiveness and awareness. The becoming of an intimate letting-be. An unseen quietness caressing the flesh, and one that has no name. You are the welcoming of the night, of mystery, and enchantment. The movement of wonder and the wonder of movement.

You are the becoming of a reciprocity flowing in both directions. You withdraw inwards; a pulling back, a return that never extends too far. You cannot settle. A soaring, airborne, stillness with wings of flight. You defy stasis. A living rhythm and beat continuing in both rest and movement. You are excessive. Uncontained. Beyond confinement. But shared in your care for limits. You always return, even if you return to an interiority that is always different. I feel you in my expansion, my blossoming, my flourishing: kissing, caressing, washing over, and wrapping around flesh. You are my movement; you are the undermined shaping, spacing, and direction of living.

We are dependent upon you. You are life and your absence is death.

You are breath breathing breath.

Breathing Movement

5.1. Introduction

Contemporary Northern Ireland is a highly divided society. Bodies continue to be enveloped by either a Protestant or a Catholic world. This enveloping provides the body with 'normative significance' (Appiah 2018), wherein the body, propelled by an unconscious desire for belonging, gains a reason for aligning to the 'normal' orientation of its territorial rooting. Sara Ahmed (2006: 1) develops the concept of orientation to refer to how bodies 'reside in space.' Orientations do not, however, 'only shape how we inhabit space, but how we apprehend this world of shared [communal] inhabitance, as well as "who" or "what" we direct our energy and attention towards' (Ahmed 2006: 3). Orientations are not autonomous but communal; they are the product of territorial dwelling.

The body enveloped by a Protestant world inherits a communal Protestant line of orientation, while the body enveloped by a Catholic world inherits a collective Catholic line of orientation. Inherited lines of orientation determine what is and what is not available to the body (Ahmed 2006). The Protestant line of orientation contains 'objects' – and objects, in this context, extend far beyond material things to also include non-material characteristics, performances, perceptions, relations, and habits – pre-scripted as Protestant, with the Catholic line of orientation contains 'objects' pre-determined as Catholic. What is available from the Protestant line of orientation and what is available from the Catholic line of orientation, exist in a binary relation of oppositional difference. Orientations to pre-scripted performances give name to the political identity being performed, whilst the name of the politically represented identity orientates the performance. The objects, experiences, performances, habits, perceptions, and relations available to the body ensure it is recognisable from within the dominant social order of Catholic or Protestant.

The interplay between divided territorial orientations and binary identity politics prevents encounters. Bodies are not encountered but known through their collective orientation that, via the workings of projective identification, is the reduction of a living body to a static object. Projective identification in contemporary Northern Ireland orientates bodies to the normative via inherited truths and narrative stereotypes. Irigaray (2008) advances the term 'standardisation from below' to refer to the stable, eternal process by which commonly held truths are passed on to new generations. Inherited truths work in tandem with Northern Ireland's geographical partitions to reproduce past histories of association, in which the cause of 'our' community's suffering is projected on to the communal 'other', who together we recognise *a priori* as threatening, hated, and immoral (Coulter 1999).

The Irish language is synonymous with the Catholic population and a Nationalist politics. Projected onto the orientation of the other, the Irish language is viewed as threatening, unavailable object to those enveloped by a Protestant world. These bodies view the language with hatred and fear. The Irish

language, thus, loses its mystery and the curiosity of its appeal, as it is reduced 'to an object of our knowledge and our sight [which] amounts to removing it from what it really is' (Irigaray 2017: 67). The very materiality of the language and the other to whom it belongs — whether in body, movement, exchange, etc. — is appropriated, in a gesture of externalised incorporation that reduces the movements of difference to a stable and permanent sameness. The destruction of the moving, sensing body, however, extends far beyond the witnessed body to also encompass the witnessing body.

Normative orientations not only habituate performance and action but also perception. Discussing the novel body's desire for belonging, Irigaray (2017: 63-64) writes:

> It is so much so that, even at the level of perception, the child will be induced to recognise what it perceives – for example what it sees – instead of being initiated into perceiving by itself… A filter of precomprehension thus precedes its approach to the real. And this paralyses its energy, especially its sensitive energy, through an a priori perception presumed to be common, through a moulding which is considered necessary but cuts it off from its source of life and puts it into an artificial ecstasy through an imposed communion with the world, with the other, and firstly, with itself.

Wrest of its incipience, relation as mere recognition is the very destruction of the moving, sensing body as its perception orientates to pre-existing communal lines of direction. In recognition, the air folding in-between and constituting they body's vitality becomes passive and unregistered, breathed without engagement, wonder, or encounter. Although this atmosphere and the habits it induces may affect the body with a sense of comfort, there is a need to be suspicious of such a culture because, via an internal desire for belonging and safety, the body is numbed, more than often unconsciously, 'into an affective embrace of stability and permanence' (Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos 2016: 151). This embrace is present before the very body it constructs and, thus, the static and permanent body it engineers is always-already known in advance of its very becoming. The body is stripped of its potential to move and blossom in its own, autonomous existence. Habitually orientated to recognise what it perceives, rather than perceiving, that is to say, *making* by oneself in relation, the self becomes defined in restriction rather than incipient possibility.

Standardisation from below is the very refusal of difference, movement, and possibility. It sustains the self and other upon a horizon of sameness, a horizon in which peace has always-already failed. Irigaray, however, suggests a body's inherited horizon can be transformed and opened through encounters of differentiation in proximity. The potentiality of the encounter resides in its capacity to challenge the 'truths' of the body's enveloping worlds. This challenge risks normative orientation as the body begins to move in and through space differently and, thus, opens an emerging possibility for peace, as relations in-between the self and other are transformed from stasis to movement. Yet, how does sociality move from stasis to movement, from normative orientation to 'queer' orientation, from recognition to perception? It is this question that we grapple with in this chapter.

The aims of this chapter are twofold. The chapter, first, seeks to understand in more detail the contemporary stasis of Northern Ireland, by describing how Turas is recognised as a deviant space transgressing and threatening the territorial and ideological boundaries and orientations upon which Northern Ireland is built. The territorial nature of Northern Ireland has been widely researched. Yet, there are few examinations that seek in interrogate the territorial stasis through the workings of inherited truths and the process of standardisation, and their manifestation in normative orientation, within the post-conflict era. Second, I consider curiosity and the movement of desire, to think how bodies animate movements deviating from inherited, predetermined lines of direction to encounter the usually unavailable Irish language. Here, I engage directly with Erin Manning's (2007) conceptualisation of desire which she determines as the desire for movement. Whilst enveloping worlds apprehend habits, performance, representation, recognition, perception, and affects, they cannot capture and domesticate nor root desire to a static, normative orientation. Desire, for Manning (2007: 36), is 'a point of indistinction, an intransigent momentary reaching toward that is in excess of both violence and the law, even while it potentially reconstitutes them.' The movement of desire directly challenges the stasis of contemporary Northern Ireland and opens onto the potential for peaceful relations. The theoretical folding in-between Irigaray's philosophy, Ahmed's thinking around orientation, and Manning's conceptualisation of desire is empirically situated in the words and movements of the bodies attending Turas. In meeting the two aims, I hope to demonstrate *how* encounters of relations of differentiation in proximity materialise in a space as divided as Northern Ireland. I consider this movement a necessary precursor to considering what happens *in* spaces of encounter.

5.2 Recognising Irish from a Protestant dwelling

By now the Newtownards Road, in the heart of the east Belfast, is a place I am familiar with. Four times a week, I leave the city centre via the Queens Bridge and walk along the Newtownards Road as I go to and from the Skainos Centre. Navigating the large triangular junction leading to the Newtownards Road and briefly skirting the gated enclave of Catholic Short Strand, I am once again, and every time, hit with a slight unease. Engraved into the background and looming tall to cast a dark shadow over their territory below, are Harland and Wolff's Samson and Goliath. Men in balaclavas supporting guns stare down from the painted walls as they pick out a target. The mark of the letters U, V, and F are visibly branded into the bricks and mortar that bind the east together. I walk alongside abandoned shops boarded shut with scenes depicting the faded colour of the activity that was once alive. Blood red poppies draw in your gaze and the Red Hand of Ulster glows proudly.

The Skainos building soon comes into sight – the living green wall standing out among the sea of gloomy, grey concrete. I take the cue to turn right, walk through the entrance into a fluorescently lit building and hurry up the three flights of steps conscious of the time. I am given a few moments at the top of the stairs to catch my breath. Breathing deeply, I ring the doorbell. Footsteps can be heard approaching, with a

smile and a friendly call of "maidin mhaith", the door opens onto a different world and I move across the threshold.

My eyes and ears are touched by different sounds and a contrasting view to the red, blue, and white of the Newtownards Road. Walking along the corridor, I pass by a big notice board peppered with different A4 sheets advertising the variety of classes on offer and the up and coming events: meánrang comhrá on Thursdays, 7-9pm; Irish dancing classes; Hag, Witches and Wise Women a talk by Rósie Ní Bhaoill; tin whistle classes; ar díol £12.00; Turn Down the Lamps traditional Irish music sessions every 2nd Friday of the month. I turn left into the office and I am met with the usual hive of activity. Different voices call out "maidin mhaith", "dia duit", and "cad é mar atá tú?", as heads are quickly pulled from the activity occupying their attention. Mirroring the outside, the wall to the right displays a painted mural featuring Samson and Goliath intertwined with a map of east Belfast but the names are different, the letters coming together in a novel manner, with accents hanging over some of the letters. Celtic knots catch the eye. The words "céad míle fáilte" woven in gold stand on top of the filing cabinet alongside a stack of books: Bínn Linn!; Ar ais Aris; Go n-éirí Leat! Cuid a Dó. An artistic impression of Conn O'Neill is spread over the larger table, bodies are warmed from mugs stamped with "cupán caife", and a stack of hand-crafted bodhrán sit in the corner, with their colourful ribbons trailing along the floor. A roller banner stands tall with the call "begin your journey with the Irish language".

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Dwelling is largely constructed through the binary of here and there. The composition of here, in this context the bordered space of east Belfast, has been constructed in opposition to there, to the geographically defined territory of west Belfast. Whilst east Belfast in vehemently marked as Protestant, British, Loyalist and Unionist, west Belfast in direct contrast is defined as Catholic, Irish, Republican, and Nationalist. Bodies rooted in east Belfast are enveloped by a Protestant world, in contrast to the Catholic enveloping of bodies rooted to west Belfast. Linda Ervine was born on the Newtownards Road and while her family politics were not Unionist, her everyday life was firmly enveloped by a Protestant world.

> *I suppose it was in some ways a very typical working class Protestant background and in other ways very untypical, umm, you know and I suppose there was conflict because, you know, for me there was that family politics but then I did the normal, went to the baths,[47] you know, built the bonfire,[48] loved the 12th, you know, but didn't understand the meaning behind it. It was just something that you did, it*

[47] Linda, here, is referring to Templemore Bath in east Belfast. The Baths were built in the Victorian era and provided a space where children played, and families socialised during the Troubles.

[48] The 12th of July is a Protestant celebration and, on the 11th night, huge wooden bonfires are lit in Protest communities across Northern Ireland. In the weeks leading up to the 11th, communities collect wood and together sculpt the increasingly large structures, which are often decorated with images of the Pope and the tricolour to also be engulfed in the burning. Frank, a member of the Orange Order, explained the reasoning behind the bonfires: "*The 11th is a difficult one for Protestants to articulate because not everybody knows what it is about themselves. There are lots of different aspects to the fire. The fire history can be from the beacons that were lit when William's victory was won at the Battle of the Boyne, you see beacons were lit up and down Ireland. They also talk about the fire that was lit by Martin Luther five hundred years of the reformation, and they talk about the campfires lit before battle [to help Williamite ships navigate through Belfast Lough in the dark night].*"

was just something that you were part of...and I was just starting to learn to be sectarian, starting to learn the songs in school, you know, I was kind of P7, first year, and you're starting to pick up all that nonsense.

Linda's Protestant orientation puts certain objects within her reach. Sara Ahmed (2006: 86) writes: 'we inherit the nearness of certain objects more than others, which means we inherit ways on inhabiting and extending into space.' As Linda's body became spoken by her east Belfast rooting (Wise 2014), her everyday life was directed – largely unconsciously – to a Protestant orientation: *"it was just something that you did, it was just something that you were part of."* Linda inherited a nearness to Templemore Baths, an intimate affinity for the excitement of constructing and setting alight the burning bonfires of 11th night, and an immediate love of the celebrations of the 12th. At school sectarian songs, such as 'The Sash',[49] were available objects, alongside the flutes and drums of the marching bands, and the red, white and blue of the Union Jack. A protestant orientation directs the body towards a fondness for the British monarchy, an unwavering support for the DUP, and a disposition favouring the colour orange. The bordered parameters of the body's reachability animate a nearness and proximity to what is already here, whilst the objects inhabiting there – such as the Gaelic Athletics Association (GAA) and Gaelic games,[50] Irish dancing, traditional Irish music and, most notably considering the current political climate

[49] The Sash, also known as The Sash My Father Wore, is widely regarded as one of the most provocative sectarian songs (Cooper 2001). It directly commemorates the victory of King William III in the Williamite War in Ireland (1690-1691) and evokes 'a world in which loyalists heroically triumph over the forces of Catholicism: King James and his Catholic army, the republican-deified hunger striker Bobby Sands, the IRA, or Gerry Adams and Sinn Féin' (Cairns 2000: 448). The song has close links to the Orange Order and is predominantly associated with Orange parades, but it has been appropriated for use in other setting (Radford 2004) and, today, is commonly heard at Irish League soccer games and at Northern Irish international matches (Bairner 2000). Its singing is perceived, at times by both sides, to by an act of intimidation and a tool for claiming space, most notably in 2013 when it was played outside St. Patrick's Catholic Church on Donegal Street by a band participating in the 12th July parade (BBC News 2013).

The Sash
So sure I'm an Ulster Orangeman, from Erin's isle I came,
To see my British brethren all of honour and of fame,
And to tell them of my forefathers who fought in days of yore,
That I might have the right to wear the sash my father wore!
Chorus: It is old but it is beautiful, and its colours they are fine
It was worn at Derry, Aughrim, Enniskillen and the Boyne.
My father wore it as a youth in bygone days of yore,
And on the Twelfth, I love to wear the sash my father wore.
For those brave men who crossed the Boyne have not fought or died in vain
Our Unity, Religion, Laws, and Freedom to maintain,
If the call should come we'll follow the drum, and cross that river once more
That tomorrow's Ulsterman may wear the sash my father wore!
Chorus
And when some day, across the sea to Antrim's shore you come,
We'll welcome you in royal style, to the sound of flute and drum
And Ulster's hills shall echo still, from Rathlin to Dromore
As we sing again the loyal strain of the sash my father wore!
Chorus

[50] Formed in 1884, the GAA is an Irish international sporting and cultural organisation protecting and promoting the indigenous Gaelic games, including hurling, camogie, Gaelic football and Gaelic handball. The Association exists 'as a touchstone for opposition to the British presence in Ireland' (Hassan and Telford 2014: 89) and, since its birth, has consistently been associated with exclusivist policies, such as 'the ban' which prevented members of the Northern Irish police and army from joining and playing (Fulton and Bairner 2007).

and contention surrounding the Irish Language Act, *Gaeilge* – are always-already excluded before they are even reached (Ahmed 2006).

Traditionally, Irish culture and traditions, including speaking *as Gaeilge*, dwell exclusively in Catholic areas, they have a home in west Belfast, in Short Strand, and on the Antrim Road. To engage with the Irish language as a Protestant necessitates crossing from this side into that side, from here to there: *'...if I wanted to learn Irish I'd have to go to west Belfast or whatever' (Sarah)*. For Belfast's Protestant community these 'far' spaces are traditionally marked as unsafe, with the body conditioned to feel a degree of fear on entering unfamiliar territory (Mitchell and Miller 2019). As we naturally turn away from what we fear, the Protestant body is excluded from Gaelic: the Irish language is always-already an object unavailable from the Protestant orientation. Rosie who travels from north Belfast to attend Irish language classes at Turas illustrates how, as a member of the Protestant community, she *"hadn't any inroads into looking for [Irish language] classes"*. However, 'fixity and unfixity are in constant tension' (Perkins and Rumford 2013) and, back in 2012, the birth of Turas called Belfast's territorial fragmentation into question.

The birth of Turas on the Newtownards Road suddenly gave the Irish language geographic nearness and proximity to the Protestant community. Moving towards the Irish language no longer required leaving one's dwelling and navigating borders, boundaries, and partitions; Gaelic was here, present within a Protestant territory. Both Josie and Karl indicate how the ability to attend an Irish language class within a geographic space of comfort and belonging increased the accessibility to the Irish language for the Protestant community.

> *Well there are other places in Belfast to go to learn Irish, but…I think it's much easier access and much more neutral territory rather than going up the Falls Road where you are in the middle of umm the middle of a big Catholic community there, you just…I'm not saying you feel threatened, you don't, it's just…it's just much better here, which I think is brilliant. (Josie)*

> *Because it was in East Belfast it felt more accessible to me and not that I've any bias at all, I have none, I'm not, I'm not sectarian whatsoever, but I think I would have felt a wee bit intimidated by going to a school in west Belfast for example... Sort of if I had have went there and felt like maybe I don't really fit in. Whereas at Turas it's like you're with, you're with your, it's a horrible thing to say but you sort of feel like you're with your own a wee bit more, you know. So, it did feel a bit more accessible. (Karl)*

Both Josie and Karl compare the location of Turas to the territorial location of Irish language classes in west Belfast, suggesting Turas has a much more accessible location. Josie seems to find it difficult to articulate why Turas is more accessible than "*going up the Falls Road*". Although Josie states she does not feel threatened by being in a Catholic community, at the same time does says "*it's just much better here*". She may 'rationally' know that the Catholic community are not threatening, yet there is still a feeling of unease with moving from here to there.

On the other hand, and despite having no bias and not being sectarian, Karl directly articulates the intimidation that would engulf his body was he to attend an Irish language school in west Belfast. This feeling of intimidation is contrasted to the feeling of comfort when "*you're with your own*"; when you are here opposed to there. Both Josie and Karl voice the difficulty in moving towards a space they are habitually conditioned to recognise as fearful, intimidating, and threatening. In contrast to the Falls Road, The Newtownards Road is a space already present and familiar from the Protestant line of orientation and, so, attending classes here does not entail crossing territorial borders and transgressing visible and invisible geographical boundaries. Turas *is* geographically more accessible form the Protestant line of orientation. Nonetheless, for a Protestant body to turn towards Turas and the Irish language, there is still a need to overcome the mountain of historically entrenched and contemporarily contentious ideological, cultural, and political boundaries. It is these boundaries we now turn to.

5.2.1 Ballaí Síochána Cultúrtha

The force behind Turas is Linda Ervine. As we have heard, Linda's background and everyday life are firmly grounded in Protestant, Loyalist east Belfast, where Linda continues to live today. Linda's life was marked by the Troubles in a way that mirrors the normalisation of violence characterising everyday Belfast during the 1970s and 1980s, yet she stresses poverty and deprivation – similarly to most of the east Belfast community – were the more acute hardship.

> *I suppose for all of us it [the Troubles] was in the background, you know. I didn't have anybody particularly close to me, my mummy's cousin was murdered, umm, she was shot dead in the house, but, you know, there was nobody, you know, I was lucky in that way. The family were, you know, sort of involved politically and you know, my daddy and my uncles would have been arrested and things for different reasons and what not…it was a backdrop to your life, you know, but the real hardship was just poverty and having children very young and unemployment and bad housing. And I had a lot of ill health, I suffered very badly from agoraphobia and, umm, I was just, just anxiety and panic attacks and fear and, you know, I just became very, very crippled, crippled with illness really.*

Linda got married very young and became a mother at the age of sixteen. To escape the paramilitarisation plaguing east Belfast, Linda's first husband joined the army. He served three years but found army life difficult and he soon returned to Belfast, where he got a job with the Michelin Tyre Factory. Unfortunately he lost his job within a few months: "*it was just the beginning of the year and he lost his job, it was just, you know, things were getting bad, he never worked again for about 4 or 5 years, you know, well I say he didn't work, he never worked legally again…My nanny used to feed us and what not, you know, it was just very, very tough times*" *(Linda)*. Linda describes her late teens and early twenties as very lonely and isolated. Her everyday life was limited to the home, and her interactions were restricted to a handful of close friends and family.

Linda's saviour was education. Linda embarked on community education courses that quickly led to GCSE's, A Levels, and a degree in English from Queens University, Belfast. Following her degree, Linda completed a year's teacher training and became an English secondary school teacher.

I went to Queens and did a Degree in English and then I did a year's teacher training and I mean it was totally, totally life changing because I think for the first time in my life I felt like I had some control over something, you know. I could make choices. I got out of my marriage which had become very violent and my husband was an alcoholic and a drug addict and, you know, it was very, very messy but it very gradually started to change, you know, and I got a job and started teaching and just, you know, started to find a bit of peace. And I then met Brian and I remarried and moved back down, because I was living on the bottom of Castlereagh Road, so I moved back down to here.

Although now living apart, Linda is married to Brian Ervine. The Ervines are a high-profile political family who have been at the forefront of contemporary Unionist politics,[51] with Brian Ervine having led the Progressive Unionist Party (PUP).

Linda's life tells the story of a typical body born in east Belfast. Protestant tradition characterises her life and, to a degree, Unionist politics. This enveloping, markedly distinct from a Catholic enveloping, provided Linda with the credibility to initiate her vision of an Irish Language centre is Belfast – her Protestant faith and intimate ties and support for Unionist politics could not be denied, and removed her from the Republican rhetoric surrounding the Irish language. When Turas first began in 2012, the bodies attending the Irish language classes were firmly rooted in the heart of east Belfast, with members of the Red Hand Commandos in attendance.[52]

Turas immediately received a significant degree of publicity. Fundamentally, this attention stems from the unique position of Turas – an Irish language project located in the heart of east Belfast aiming to connect Protestants to their own history through Gaelic – and the direct involvement of Linda Ervine. With the current contention surrounding the Irish language and the DUP's continual rejection of an Irish Language Act, Turas has increasingly been drawn into political debates both in Belfast and further afield.

I wouldn't have opened my mouth because I felt it was too much of a political hot potato and I was quite frightened to be honest. And then something happened on social media, where I actually said no,

[51] The Ervine family are well-known in Belfast and across Northern Ireland. David Ervine, who was Linda's brother-in-law, was leader of the PUP from 2002-2007, when he suddenly died at the age of fifty-three. David Ervine, in his younger years, was an active member of the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF), and during the Troubles he was jailed for eleven years for transporting a bomb. On his release from jail in 1980, Ervine joined the PUP and in 1997 he was elected as a Belfast city councillor. Ervine campaigned vehemently for the 1998 'yes' vote for the Good Friday Agreement and, as a member for east Belfast, he returned to the Assembly. In 2002, he become the leader of the PUP and was an integral force in preventing the collapse of the Loyalist ceasefire (Bowcott 2007).

[52] The Red Hand Commandos are a small Ulster Loyalist paramilitary group, who are closely linked to the UVF. The group is named after the Red Hand of Ulster, a symbol permeating the street of east Belfast. Whilst their involvement in the Troubles is widely acknowledged, they are recognised as a very secretive and disciplined group, with the consequence little is known about their formation and activity. Today, the role of Red Hand Commando members is non-military and civilianized, and many actively participating in community work (Ferguson 2016). Interestingly, in 2016 the CTS* worked closely with the Red Hand Commandos in an arts-based peacebuilding project, wherein the group explored their identity and together created a stain glass window. The window was first unveiled to Irish President Michael D. Higgins and was displayed as the Department for Foreign Affairs and Trade in Belfast. I attended a meal at the Irish Secretariat building in celebration of the Red Hand Commandos work with the CTS*. During the meal, a member of the group, who is now engaged to an Irish speaker from west Belfast who teaches at Turas, stated: "*at one time she [his fiancé] would have been the ideal target – from west Belfast, comes from a high profile Republican family, and she's an Irish speaker.*"

I am in favour [on an Irish Language Act]… I was always afraid, you know, how far could I go. You were waiting to sort of, you know, the bubble will burst here, and I'll be attacked. Now I've got a lot more confidence, I just think no, this is what I believe, but you were sort of feeling your way. And of course, there's Brian in the background going, oh you know, be careful, don't say this, don't say that. But umm, anyway I went and thought about it and I had people who were coming to me and you know, they were sort of supportive of me but they didn't wanna be photographed with me, they didn't wanna be seen with me, they didn't want anybody knowing, you know, so it was all behind doors, and I was quite disgusted by that. So, I thought I can't, I can't be like that, you know, if I believe something then I have to believe it publicly and I have to say it publicly.

With Brexit and the suspension of Stormont, the atmosphere in Northern Ireland has altered. The increasing tension moving through Belfast is manifest in a shift of attitude towards Turas. Today, the historic abhorrence for the Irish language among the Protestant community has extended to a direct distaste for the Turas project and Linda herself.

Linda's Protestant and Unionist enveloping legitimised her initial movements towards the Irish language. Yet, this movement today is framed as a deviation from the communal Protestant orientation. I merely mentioned I was learning Irish at Turas and without even taking a breath Frank, an active member of the Orange Order, firmly exclaimed: "*With Linda Ervine? She is **hated** amongst the Protestant community*." Linda's personal history has largely been forgotten by the staunch members of her community who, now, regard her with great contempt. The presence of Turas undoubtedly challenges the fixity of Northern Ireland's boundaries and borders, however in a contrasting movement, Unionist politicians have overwhelmingly framed debates surrounding the Irish Language Act within the historic zero-sum narrative, as a victory for Republicanism that compromises the very 'Britishness' of Northern Ireland. The Irish language remains closely tied to Republicanism in the post-conflict era, as Patrick discussed:

Cos it [the Irish language] still has that [Republican] attachment to it, even among friends of mine, party political friends of mine would still say to me, oh what are you learning that old Provo Irish for.

The Irish language continues to be recognised through inherited truths, sustaining a framing that posits a movement towards the Irish language as a transgression of, and act antithetical to, Unionist politics and a Protestant, British way of life.

Turas is perceived among the Protestant community to challenge Northern Ireland's 'natural' union with Great Britain, as it advances a direct threat to the British character of east Belfast. Áine, who works for Turas, explains the workings of this perception.

Áine: *So if you have a good solid Protestant, Loyalist, British east Belfast that safeguards their base, anything that begins to diminish that in any way however slightly, potentially they see their base eroding a little bit. So, I think for those kinds of groupings that's challenging, they won't like it, you know.*

Ciara: *And if your leadership is continually and repeatedly telling you that then you can understand why it's that kind of rhetoric which becomes commonplace and gains an ordinariness in everyday society, as opposed to just at the political elite level.*

Áine: *Yes, yes, so I think, you know, a vested interest I suppose you would call it – legitimately invested interest not so legitimately vested interest – I think probably they feel anything that threatens the identity of the area threatens them, ultimately... If you see this part of the city as British, then anything that isn't overtly British is a challenge.*

Turas' location on the Newtownards Road taints the exclusive British, Unionist identity of east Belfast and, in turn, the natural presence of the Protestant community in Northern Ireland – a rhetoric that has been absorbed into broader contemporary narratives.

Since the colonisation of Ireland, in terms of both population and power, the Protestant settler community has been dominant across the Ulster province. The Good Friday Agreement, under the principle of parity of esteem, challenged this dominance. The last couple of decades have witnessed a growth in the power and influence of Nationalist politics, culminating in an expansion of rights and visibility for the Catholic community, with a growth in the tangible displays of Irish culture and traditions. Accompanying this growth is an increase in the number of Northern Irish citizens identifying as Catholic, while the Protestant community is witnessing steady decline (Holland and Rabrenovic 2017).[53] Subsumed within binary logic, the increasing visibility of a growing Catholic community with expanding rights represents a loss or diminishment to the Protestant community.

Frank is an active member of the Orange Order and one afternoon he showed me around the Orange Hall in north Belfast. Although not open to the public, the Orange Hall resembles a museum (see figure 15). Walking through the different rooms, Frank showed me a picture of Nelson's Pillar in Dublin. The Pillar was erected before the Republic of Ireland became an independent state. In 1966, the IRA planted explosives that severely damaged the Pillar, with the Irish Army later destroying the remnants. An hour later, sitting in a Presbyterian coffee shop, Frank and I had a more in-depth conversation about the Orange Order and the shifting manner in which it has approached Irishness.

[53] The last census in 2011 revealed 48% of Northern Ireland's resident population identified themselves as Protestant or as brought up in the Protestant tradition, which marked a 5% drop from the 2001 census (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2012). In contrast, those describing themselves as Catholic or as brought up Catholic increased by 1%, reaching 45% in 2011 (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2012). More recent figures, taken from 2016 and which surveyed those of working age, revealed of this population 42% identify as Catholic and 41% identify as Protestant (Executive Office 2019). The difference among schoolchildren is starker, with 51% of schoolchildren identifying at Catholic compared to 37% identifying as Protestant (Gordon 2018). Whilst there is still a notably larger percentage of Protestants over the age of sixty (57% to 35% identifying as Catholic), it is believed by the 2021 census Northern Ireland may have a Catholic majority (Gordon 2018). Although 45% of people identified as being from a Catholic background in the 2011 census, in the same census only 25% of Northern Ireland's residents claimed an exclusive Irish identity, while 40% identified as British only, and 21% described themselves as exclusively Northern Irish (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2012). Thus, whilst an increasing percentage of Northern Ireland's population may identify as Catholic, this does not necessarily mean there is also an increasing number identifying as Irish.

Ciara: *You were saying when you were explaining about Nelson's Pillar in Dublin that there is that kind of fear Protestantism is being lost or is being challenged or threatened, is that a founded fear or do you think it is more of a perceived threat?*

Frank: *I think it is a founded fear. From the very start of Unionism, it was Winston Churchill's dad Randolph Churchill who coined the phrase 'Ulster will fight and Ulster will be right', at the start but ever since then a lot of the slogans of 'no surrender', 'not an inch', 'what we have*

Figure. 15. Images taken from the Orange Hall in north Belfast. From top right: flag depicting the Red Hand of Ulster, uniform warn when participating in Orange parades, and a series of drums used in Loyalist marching bands (author's own, 9th October 2017).

we hold', you know 'this we shall maintain', it is all about maintaining a way of life and an identity which the Ulster Protestants see as being under threat or being eroded… The tradition of Organism is parading, and would you say parading is under threat, rightly or wrongly you have to say parades are under threat, whatever your viewpoint is you have to say it is under threat. Orange Halls, where Orangemen meet, are they under threat? Well I think it is, 285 of the 600 hundred Orange Halls have been attacked. Belfast Orange Hall is the most attacked building in Belfast, perhaps only second or equal with Greencastle Orange Hall [in Donegal]. There was an author called A.T.K. Stewart, he wrote a book called the Ulster Crisis, and he says they might never make Northern Ireland Irish, you will never have an all-Ireland, but what they will do they will make the place so Irish they couldn't live in it and we see that is where it is going, that is where the country is going. Irishness is on the rise and erm a sense of Britishness is certainly under threat.

Ciara: *And what would you point to that would show Irishness is on the rise? The Irish Language Act?*

Frank: *The Irish Language Act is certainly the biggest one, but you can talk about Irish being funded to the tune of two hundred million pounds per year…erm and you can talk about cross-border, and you can talk about the Good Friday Agreement which established the Southern Government with a role in anything that happens in Northern Ireland from now on. There are Southern Government offices at Stormont. So those are all sovereignty issues and they are things, I don't have a problem with all of those, but some people point to those as a diminishing of Britishness. The flag coming down of the City Hall is erm…a removal of a very British symbol, but it's coming down and there is an increase in City Hall of Republican stained-glass windows. The argument is they are creating a shared space…whether the shared space is right or not, again I am not trying to get into the argument, I am just trying to say to get that shared space there has to be a decrease in Britishness…*

Ciara: *Because it was originally a British place?*

Frank: *A 100% British. Belfast has a very British history, when it got its charter [in 1888] I think it was like a 6% Catholic population, then at the time of the Home Rule crisis in 1912 it was something like a 20% Catholic population, erm today it is a 55% going by the balance of power at City Hall, a 55% Catholic population. So, the Irish are playing catch up in the building of the city. They don't have a natural, historical, visual presence in the city, so the only way they can do that is to build more Irish monuments, structures, identities, erm, and to take down or dilute some of the British ones.*

Mirroring Áine's words, Frank voices how the increasing presence of Irishness and Irish culture throughout Belfast is perceived by the Protestant community to be accompanied by a dilution of the Britishness. The presence of the Irish language – a fundamental component to and marking of Irishness – in Loyalist east Belfast epitomises, for large sections of the Protestant community, this dilution and advances a contesting

claim to the "*natural, historical, visual presence*" of Britishness and to those who regard themselves as British.[54] The Irish language has been coded and recognised as a "*weapon that undermines the union*" *(Seamus)*. This rhetoric, which has becoming increasingly vocal following the birth of Turas against the backdrop of a growing Catholic community and Stormont's suspension, sustains the stasis of the mass Protestant orientation. The Protestant community continue to turn away from Gaelic, fearful that through an engagement with the language they would "*mutate into Republicans*" *(Laura)*. To learn the Irish language as a Protestant is a movement in direct opposition to the cultural and moral milieu of one's own world, it is a movement deviating from the straight line of orientation inherited from one's enveloping world. It is this movement that we now begin to move with.

5.3 Moving Towards Turas

"What am I doing here? Should I really be doing this?"

I sit in the car park and these questions. These thoughts circulate continually through my mind, round and round. I have been sitting here now for fifteen minutes, watching as the large hand on the clock edges closer and closer to the right where, taking on a regimented vertical position, it chimes the hour.

"What am I doing here? Should I really be doing this?"

I haven't told anyone I am here. It's a secret. If I'd told them they might have stopped me, blocked my very movement. When they find out they won't be happy. They will respond to my confession – if I confess – with some smart comment. Or worse, they will be hurt, confused, angry. My movement will be considered as a betrayal, a betrayal of who they are, a betrayal of whom they know me to be.

"What am I doing here? Should I really be doing this?"

The big hand is still moving towards vertical alignment. I face straight ahead, but my eyes dart quickly back and forth, across the car door window, to and from the entrance. The almost invisible pane of glass acts as the partition, separating the world that is beyond from my world here. A fragile partition. A breakable border.

"What am I doing here? Should I really be doing this?"

[54] Within the parameters of this rhetoric it is worth noting that, whilst the focus of Turas resides in the provision of Irish language classes, as the project has grown it has become increasingly interested in the Gaelic history of east Belfast. Today, Turas offers a Gaelic Bus Tour uncovering the hidden Gaelic history of East Belfast. Turas, also, have unearthed the history of Conn O'Neill, a Gaelic lord who reigned over east Belfast in the 16th century, and now celebrates this history in another bus tour and in the *Féil Conn O'Neill*. Along with several other organisations, Turas are involved in planning a proposal for the creation of an Irish Medium nursery and primary school in east Belfast (Meredith 2018). With Turas becoming increasingly embedded in east Belfast and, what is more, uncovering a Gaelic history of this 'traditionally' British, Loyalist space, the rhetoric of threat and challenge of the Turas project to the identity of the area has increased.

If I'm going to move towards the entrance, then it has to be now. A long, deep breath in and out. I want to do this. A long, deep breath in and out. Slowly and with caution, my hand moves towards the handle on the car door and my body sits tall. A long, deep breath in and out. The glass partition becomes clouded as breath moves from the outside to the inside and back again: the partition becomes visible but so does its fragility. A long, deep breath in and out.

The border slowly dissolves, and I extend into space.

"I am moving, and I am doing this."
Based on interview, October 11th 2017

A body deviating from its inherited line of direction animates a 'queer' movement. Queer, as Ahmed (2006: 198, my emphasis) employs it in this context, does not 'refer us to nonnormative sexualities but to the moment in which *norms fail to be reproduced*.' To turn towards Turas and engage with the Irish language is to respire in a movement failing to align to inherited norms of action, representability, and perception. Ahmed (2006: 66) argues the queer moment, 'in which objects appear slantwise and the vertical and horizontal axis appears "out of line", must be overcome.' There is a need to overcome the queer movements because the contradiction of norms prevents bodily action and, so, reduces the body to stasis. Overcoming the queer movement is not animated via realignment but through breathing life and vitality into movements that are out of line. Irigaray (2008a) reminds us it is by taking on, by moving with, the not-being of a straight continuum that we become ecstatic. The queer moment only prevents movement when we remain within our current horizon, where we dwell in the stasis of predetermined, straight lines; a horizon in which there is not movement but merely a continuity of direction. Moving with the queer moment requires putting oneself and one's dwelling in question; it requires a movement not only towards the other but a movement in which we return to the self. This movement of return can be located in curiosity.

A queer movement towards Turas, wherein norms fail to be reproduced, necessitates curiosity. Curiosity advances a call to the other – a call from which the possibility of the encounter is animated. The stasis of Northern Ireland's current horizon is largely suspended in a disenchantment in which everything is always-already known, labelled as us or them, as near or far. Turas, however, is unique; it a novelty moving in-between polarised labels. This novelty animates a curious call to the other, a call responded to in a queer movement.

Áine first started attending Irish language classes at Turas in June 2016. She was immediately impressed by Turas and was soon volunteering to support the project. The number of learners attending Turas has increased year on year, which has put considerably pressure on its administrative running. Having gained a small pot of additional funding, Turas advertised a part-time administrative role which Áine successfully applied for. Reminiscing about first starting Irish language classes in east Belfast, Áine places her initial

attraction in the novelty of Turas' location and the project's aim of using Gaelic to break down sectarian divisions.

> *I was intrigued by what they were doing. I was intrigued by the fact that they were trying to bed down the Irish language here in East Belfast and I suppose it did attract me, not for the same reason as it would have attracted maybe people who are more indigenous to the area, but because I liked that idea.*

Áine's background is characterised by a familiarity with the Irish language. Áine was born in Dublin in the Republic of Ireland and, so, the Irish language is an object of everyday familiarity that was taught in school, seen daily on road signs, and displayed in many businesses and public locations. Whilst the Irish language is accessible and immediately present from Áine's inherited orientation, the heart of east Belfast with its Union Jack and red hands is not necessarily somewhere you would expect Áine to feel wholly comfortable. Yet, alongside the unique aim of the project, it was the novel location of east Belfast that sparked a fascination and curiosity for Áine and called her towards this Gaelic space.

The novelty of the location of Turas does not, for Áine, extend to the area itself. Áine lives in east Belfast and, so, prior to attending Turas she was already familiar with the area. Áine moved from Dublin to Belfast in 2014, which was a time of minimal violence and political stability. In addition, Áine's first-hand experience of the Troubles was likely to be minimal. Violence was largely confined within the borders of Northern Ireland,[55] which geographically removed Áine from the contentious and violent history of Northern Ireland broadly and of east Belfast more locally. Áine would clearly be aware of this history, but she would not have directly experienced the everyday repetition of violence or have an acute memory of the brutality that plagued east Belfast at the time of the conflict and for many years after.

Later in our conversation, Áine revealed her curiosity and admiration for Turas resided not only in the location of Turas, but in the presence of Gaelic in an urban area.

> *Also, which I find absolutely fascinating, is the fact that Irish is becoming an urban language in Belfast whereas when I mentioned the efforts to teach me Irish when I was in school, at that point in time, Irish was the language of the countryside, it was not an urban language and it didn't sit easy with me. I grew up in inner city Dublin, it didn't make sense to me, it just didn't, it didn't make any sense. I was always talking about going out to the bog and putting your boat out, what is this about? And I think it's just fascinating now to see people who have become fluent, as young people, in an urban environment and how they are adapting the language to that urban environment.*

The curiosity Áine feels towards Turas is bound up with a broader fascination in the resurgence and popularity of the language in the city of Belfast. Áine contrasts this popularity with the perception she had of the language when she was at school in inner city Dublin, and the demise of Gaelic in the Republic

[55] While the conflict was mostly contained in Northern Ireland, the IRA's armed struggle did encompass sustained bombing campaigns against military, economic, and political targets in Britain, while Loyalists paramilitary groups occasionally advanced attacks in the Republic (White 2003).

of Ireland. The curiosity felt in touching upon this difference returns the body to itself, as Áine's habitual perceptions of the Irish language are challenged.

Locating the queer movement towards the Irish language in curiosity, does not give curiosity a singular location. Irigaray (2008a: 21) emphasises 'the place where the call of the other reaches us,' the place in which we become affected by the fullness of curiosity, is unique to each body. Thus, whilst some learners, like Áine, placed their curiosity most prominently in the novel location of Turas and in the unique way in which the project was conceived, for other learners the feeling of curiosity was sparked by the link between the language and Irish history or by the link between Gaelic and local place names. As Josie articulates: "*I started being interested because of place names, I think that brings a lot of people to Irish, if you are interested in place names.*" Other bodies placed their initial curiosity with Gaelic in their personal family history or in the Irish language itself.

Gareth, who now works for Turas, recalls the curiosity he felt when seeing and hearing the Irish language as a child.

> *I had relatives who said they couldn't get into the Guards unless they spoke Irish and I thought this is discrimination, but I didn't have any big feelings about it and then of course the Troubles broke out and, umm, they started to put up signs on the lower Ormeau Road, it was the first place in Belfast where they were put up. But I remember being curious about them as opposed to just being, as opposed to being hostile to them, which I shouldn't have been being a Protestant or whatever. Err, but when I heard the theme from Harrys Game, umm, I, I thought it's amazing that they speak Irish, so I got the album, umm, the spelling was very strange, so I was very curious about that and I've always been interested in words and languages and stuff. And I remember at the time as well I was a bit lost after leaving school and I was looking for a, err... And I remember the shock of going to Gweedore, where Clonard came from and hearing people speak Irish, I was just completely gobsmacked, umm, by the fact that you could drive two, two hours away, two to three hours away and suddenly there's a whole community speaking a different language. Umm, so that got me into it and then it sort of accelerated.*

Gareth gives voice to the shock and admiration felt the first time he visited the Gaeltacht where, less than a three-hour drive from Belfast, there was whole community conversing in the Irish language. In addition, he speaks of a curiosity and interest felt on seeing the 'strange spelling' of Gaelic words. Mark, who started attending Turas with his wife Mary in 2017, also spoke of a fascination with the pronunciation and spelling of the Irish language: "*I just find it fascinating and over the years, just even trying to pronounce stuff is just sort of bizarre, (laughing) you know because it doesn't look the way it's pronounced.*" Although stemming from a variety of locations, the main impetus for moving towards Turas resides in curiosity. As the founder of Turas, Linda has witnessed approximately 2,000 learners coming through the doors (Mitchell and Miller 2019), many of whom she has had a direct conversation with. Linda acknowledges there are several reasons people attend Turas, yet she suggests "*...for a lot of them it's just curiosity about Turas and we've seen that curiosity increasingly grown.*"

5.3.1 Desiring movement

Curiosity is closely intertwined with desire. To feel curiosity towards something is to approach it with a strong desire. Desire is usually thought is terms of a desire for knowledge, understanding, or information. To capture curiosity in knowledge and understanding, as the current organisation of our world does, is to diminish it to an activity of possession and appropriation or to a search for similarity, sameness, and identification (Irigaray 2008a). When curiosity is governed by already defined habits, norms, gestures, codes, and discourses approaching everything from a known totality, the potential for desire dissipates as everything and everyone has already been made our own (Irigaray 2002b). Desire cannot be felt for an object already captured, while desire itself cannot be captured. Desire, for Manning (2007: 36), 'is movement.' It is beyond capture, domestication, mortgage and nationalisation. It does not 'belong to the state or to state-sanctioned practices' and it exceeds violence and the law (Manning 2007: 36). Desire, however, must be cared for (Irigaray 2008a), by allowing the body to wander and wonder in curiosity, with a novelty that is not always-already imprisoned in the totality of sameness. Curiosity is not a desire for understanding but, following Manning (2007: 36), a desire for the 'the body in movement.'

Approaching the other in curiosity awakens or revives a relation with desire as movement. Desire holds the capacity to move the body in a tending-to or reaching-towards. This movement responds to the other who has called out to us, to the one who has awoken curiosity in us. Reaching towards the other first requires a tending towards oneself and one's own manner of dwelling. Irigaray (2008a: 7-8) illustrates before the other can be encountered there is a need for us to:

> ...turn back on our path in order to question ourselves about where we are already situated. If we are not dwelling where we ought to dwell, being what or who we are, we are not prepared to encounter the other. We are only able to impose on the other our alienation, misunderstanding, or ignorance. Opening a threshold in order to approach the other requires that we dwell where we can and should be.

In the ceaseless search for territorial roots, the starting point for our (mass) orientation will continue to unfold from a world, a body, and a dwelling that is already known. However, if we take an alternative starting point that views the body not as a being but as a to-be, then, what we understand to be the origins of the body also alter. The body animates its own becoming and makes its own origins through acts that cut it from enveloping mass roots. We come into existence, Irigaray (2017: vi) writes, 'by taking on the not-being of a [straight] continuum – a break, a void, a nothing – with regards to its provenance and environment.' It is by 'ec-sisting' from our origins, by becoming out of place, that we animate our 'being as ecstatic' (Irigaray 2017: xi). Opposed to conforming to the habits, norms, and gestures of the enveloping world in which we dwell, we must question our dwelling and move out of place.

We previously listened-to Mark giving voice to the curiosity and fascination he felt on hearing the spoken sounds of Gaelic and on seeing the language in its written form. Listening with greater intimacy to how Mark voices his movement towards Turas, we can begin to sense how being in a relation of desire to this strange and bizarre language animated a movement towards his own body and dwelling. Mark and his

wife, Mary, decided to take the leap and started attending Turas at the beginning of the 2017/18 academic year. Mark grew up in a traditional working-class Protestant family in north Belfast. His parents did not ideologically or physically embrace the Orange culture, but Organism did have a notable presence for his grandfather and grandmother who lived in the infamous Shankill area of Belfast and had an Orange Hall at the top of their street. Thinking back to his childhood, Mark recalls: "*there being a picture of me somewhere from when I was about three with an orange sash on.*" Mark's territorial dwelling and the truths he inherited put particular 'objects' within his bodily reach, such as the orange sash and the (Protestant) state school system. Other objects – GAA sports, the Irish language, Irish songs, and the Celtic culture – were unreachable. Although Mark has and continues to find himself straightened by the pull of his inherited Protestant orientation, he states: "*I never owned what I would see to be that tradition, Loyalist, British bit of things.*" Living with these feeling of separation and alienation, Mark for many years has desired something else, something more, something different.

> *I was also going to Chile at one stage with work and they suggested that I got an Irish passport and I began to think much more where I was from and who I was, and I felt I had much more of an affinity towards Ireland than towards Britain, partly due to what I perceived to be people's attitudes and yet I wasn't fully Irish as part of that culture was denied to me because of where I was brought up and how I was brought up, going to a normal state school and so on. So, I suppose I perceive myself to be Irish, I have a much closer affinity with Ireland than I would have to Britain. I love Irish music, I am just, it is something to do with identity and I am not comfortable with the identity people assume I am, maybe that is to do with politics as there is an assumption that because you are Protestant you are this, but I am probably Protestant and not that you know, I would probably perceive myself to be more Nationalist than anything else. I have always, for quite a long time, I have sort of yearned for something, for part of that Irishness and, as I say, I like Irish music and I would love to understand what I was actually listening to some of the time, and so the idea and the opportunity to do this [learn Irish] really just appealed to me.*

Mark, here, locates the impetus for his movement towards Turas in a turning back towards his own body. A movement of embodied return animates a questioning of oneself and one's own dwelling: it animates a disorientation in which one begins to wonder about and question the continuity of their inherited orientation (Ahmed 2006). Applying for an Irish passport marked a notable moment of internal and embodied questioning for Mark. This questioning affected Mark with the desire to cultivate a sense of Irishness, an object unavailable from his inherited orientation; he responded to the call of curiosity by first turning towards his own dwelling.

Mark gives voice to an embodied desire that cannot be understood as a desire for understanding. It is not an activity of appropriating the other, or a search for likeness within a horizon in which everything and everyone is already known. Mark is not 'searching for a possible mediation in a common world already existing' (Irigaray 2017: vii); in an already existing Catholic world that is oppositional to his inherited Protestant enveloping. Nor is Mark seeking to rewrite his past. Questioning dwelling is a movement of gratitude cultivating 'the distance necessary to see that our own singular being does not

need to be continuous with the world into which we were born' (Bregazzi 2019: 101). Gratitude prevents the body from becoming fixated by and in the past. It releases the body 'from resentment and frees our energy to construct bridges towards the future and to become ourselves, bridges in order that a new humanity can occur' (Irigaray 2017: 64). Speaking about the bodies who move towards Turas, Áine illustrates these are the bodies "*who are already facing the right direction...the ones who are looking back towards the past, you're probably never going to convince of anything*." Mark voices how his movement towards Turas arose from a questioning in which: "*I began to think much more where I was from and who I was.*" Mark's search for Irishness, then, is not a rejection or overcoming of the past nor is it a projection of himself onto a Catholic orientation. He is not attempting to construct a quietness by assimilating to the world of the other, but wondering about and beyond himself by listening 'to the desire of the other that attracts us beyond a horizon defined by sameness and the already common, a desire which remembers the ecstasis from which we exist and calls us back to the question our human being' (Irigaray 2017: vii).

Desire is the becoming of relationality always starting anew. Mark desires a becoming moving in relation to Irishness wherein the body does not 'coincide with itself…[but] with its own transition: its own variation' (Massumi 2002: 4). It is the desire for a movement breaking from the stasis of one's inherited orientation, as the call of the other ask 'us to unveil what our own being consists of and to discover how to allow it to remain and grow as being' (Irigaray 2017: 70). Desire as movement is an unveiling that begins to subvert the dualism, the sameness, of the current horizon – a subversion that moves with an embodied and intimate curiosity, as well as with the distance of gratitude. As Mark himself states: "*I am probably Protestant and not that [Unionist/Loyalist].*"

Not all conversations expressed as acutely as Mark how the desire to approach Turas first inspires a movement towards the self. Yet, there was a continual, if less explicit, voicing of a return to one's own body and a questioning of the binary identity politics upon which post-conflict Northern Ireland continues to take as its foundation. This can be exemplified by briefly returning to Áine's and Gareth's story, both of whom work for Turas and, so, may have been more overtly questioned and challenged on their association with the project. Having articulated her curiosity surrounding the Turas project and its geographical location, Áine stated:

> *I don't like, I've known other people from south of Ireland who have moved to Belfast and they kind of just almost reinforced the geographical divisions that are here because they go to areas that are full of people they feel are like themselves and they don't come out of them, and I don't like that, I have a personal mission not to do that. So, I suppose coming here was part of that, I thought, you know, I don't want to just learn Irish with other people who are from a similar religious or cultural background or whatever... It was an opportunity to just break that mould a little bit and maybe contribute to more heterogeneity.*

Here, we listen-to how Áine's turn towards Turas lay in questioning the norms – the cultural, political, and embodied division – of her current dwelling and its normative orientation. This is not a desire for the

other but a desire for the body to be in an alternative, incipient movement which does not reinforce 'what is' but creates bodies, relations and worlds anew.

Gareth's movement towards the Irish language, also, inspired a return to and questioning of oneself and one's own dwelling. Gareth's inherited Protestant orientation compels the body to recognise the Irish language, the Gaelic street names on the Ormeau Road, as firstly belonging to the other who is not-us, and, secondly, with fear and hostility. Feeling curiosity opposed to recognising an external fear caused Gareth to turn towards his own body: "*But I remember being curious about them as opposed to just being, as opposed to being hostile to them, which I shouldn't have been being a Protestant.*" Gareth's desire for the Irish language moves him, potential unconsciously, towards his own body where he questions 'what it is that has stuck…him as new, different or unknown' (Mulder 2009: 246). This questioning animates the body in a movement towards the self, as 'desire upsets our representation of the world...[and] brings us back to a being in the presence extraneous to the circle of representation' (Irigaray 2017: 72). Desire, then, cultivates an opening and it is with this opening that the body gains the capacity to animate a queer movement towards Turas, as desire is 'brought back to the one who awakened it' (Irigaray 2008a: 74).

The movement of desire entails risk. To return to the body in an internal questioning is to challenge the very construction of our enveloping world and, so, the very being on one's body (Nollert and Sheikhzadengan 2016). Irigaray (2017: 28) writes to question one's dwelling is to spatialise the world anew, to 'disclose it or to let it take form(s) according to its own dynamism.' Questioning dwelling is a difficult task, not least because it is a movement our tradition has generally forbidden (Irigaray 2008a). The acquired shape of a world is maintained as straight when dwelling bodies are inline which, as Ahmed (2006: 66) illustrates, 'means when they are aligned to other lines.' Vertical alignment, shaped via repetitive action across time, is the normative (Ahmed 2006). For a world to have a sustained shape, then, bodies are required to be in a continual process of alignment. Breaking with a normative alignment is both risky and dangerous, as Gareth and Karl express.

> *I was a wee bit, god am I doing anything wrong here, am I betraying something, you know with this, because I did see it as a Catholic language, I did see it as a Republican language and you know, and a lot of my background, there was a part of me am I betraying something, you know. (*Gareth*)*

> *So, the first night I went I sort of thought, I was actually sitting in the car park at Turas and I was, I was like, I remember thinking to myself is this, should I really be doing this. I was like, I dunno, because my parents, I didn't even tell my parents I was going to do it I just kinda went. (Karl*)

Moving with desire is often accompanied by feelings of betrayal and disloyalty. The maintenance of inherited territorial roots requires a dwelling in continuation, a persistence in which there is never a break, a return, or an opening. Moving with desire risks putting the vertical out of line; it risks the sameness of the common.

5.4 Conclusion: A movement towards breath

Located in the heart of Protestant and Loyalist east Belfast, Turas is situated at the core of the Catholic-Protestant narrative. It is marked as a space that threatens the very character of east Belfast, while those who move towards the space are largely perceived to be performing a deviant act of betrayal. Northern Ireland's current political turmoil has called on bodies to adopt increasingly hard-line positions, giving this narrative an acute force and power that works to re-align potentially deviant bodies. Grounded in a historical narrative, the Irish language continues today as a highly symbolic corollary of the polarised partitioning of Northern Ireland's two communities, recognised on one side with an affection and love and on the other side as a nonsensical, Republican weapon. Yet, it is the stark polarisation of Northern Ireland which allowed for the creation of an Irish language project in east Belfast.

The territorial legacy of Northern Ireland does not simply frame Turas as a deviant space. In jarring juxtaposition, the active process of territorialisation unintentionally constructs Turas as a space of novelty and curiosity. Marked as a threatening language that the Protestant body should be fearful of, the Irish language has been suspended in an abeyance of drawing close: always there but never here. Turas, however, placed the Irish language in the heart of Protestant territory. The presence of the Irish language on the Newtownards Road sparked curiosity with the space of Turas but, also, permitted expressions of curiosity with the Irish language in itself. The body progressing along the communal Protestant line of orientation cannot, however, respond to the curious call voiced by the other. Responses to curious calls require movement. Movement that, first, turns back towards the self, as one begins to question their own dwelling and their own body. This creates a break in territorial orientation and animates a movement out of place whereby the body becomes ecstatic.

Queer movements risk the sameness of the common. They risk the verticality of the communal orientation through which worlds sustain their shape. The moving body loses balance and embarks upon an unknown adventure from which there is a break in continuity or normative orientation as the idea of a stable, coherent body is subverted. Moving in an unexpected direction may, at first, be experienced as a disorientation (Manning 2007). These new and extant directions are not predetermined or communal. They are not the continuation of inherited orientations that reproduces the bodies as essentialised objects, but the creation of an embodied movement active prior the form.

While novel movements can be accompanied by feeling of nausea and giddiness, Ahmed (2006: 157, my emphasis) illustrates how moments of disorientation cannot be reduced to such nausea; they are also the becoming of vitality.

> They are bodily experiences that throw the world up or throw the body from its ground. Disorientation as a bodily feeling can be unsettling and it can shatter one's sense of confidence in the ground or one's belief that the ground on which we reside can support the actions that make a life feel liveable. Such feeling of shattering, or being shattered, might persist and become a crisis.

> Or the feeling might pass as the ground returns or as we return to the ground. The body might be reoriented if the hand that reaches out finds something to steady an action. Or the hand might reach out and find nothing, and might grasp instead *the indeterminacy of air*.

The body responding to the call of curiosity moves towards Turas as an unknown and mysterious space unlocatable in the territorial divisions of Northern Ireland. This is not a known, predetermined movement wherein the body continues in static worlds rooted to a defined, bordered territory. Rather, it is a movement that shatters the very idea of solid ground or rooting. A body in movement refuses 'the fixity of foundation' (Armour 1997: 73) to animate a movement that is the becoming of an opening outside the current territorial horizon of Catholic or Protestant, in the initial makings of something new and different. This movement is an ungrounding (E. R. Jones 2011); a dynamic, unfolding movement that returns the body to the potential of breath.

This chapter has moved with desire and curiosity to analyse how bodies break from inherited lines of orientation to create an opening to an encounter unlocatable in the solid rooting of territory. These bodies may have yet to encounter the Irish language, but they are the bodies that are already moving in relations of differentiation in proximity. Thus, I hope to have illustrated encounters are active prior to their physical manifestation and there is a pressing need to think not just what happens in the encounter but, also, the movements that make the encounter a possibility. It is these initial movement of curiosity and desire that are the very first weavings of peace. They are the opening to relations unlocatable in the solid rooting of territory: to encounters active in the shared practice of breathing.

Interruption: The Halting of Time

Her body shook with anger. A raw pain filled the room and reverberated throughout the air. There was complete stillness apart from the movement of lips: "they still roam free and I can bump into them anywhere and at any time: the paramilitaries. And these are our own paramilitaries...they are the men who killed my son." A latent, but forever present, anger and resentment had forcefully and suddenly taken hold of the voice and infiltrated the air. Pain and injustice visibly manifest in the shaking body; in the intense, wide-eyed stare full of sorrow, pain, and desperation. A stare willing for freedom from the enduring torture continuing to eat away at the body. A pain and anger embedded in the marrow of who I am. Wherever I go, it goes. Wherever it goes, I orient. Boiling away, erupting at any moment. Corroding all it encounters, poisoning everywhere is travels. A virus that does not need air to foster contagion once declared. Its declaration suspends movement. It halts the body. It is the standstill of time.

A dark cloud settles on the room. Gradually it recedes but it never dissipates. It lingers eternally.

Based on Research Journal, February 15th 2017, Dealing with the Past workbook session.

Interlude

The Failure of Contact

We were all finally packed onto the coach after what had been a few difficult days of planning and dealing with the incessant questions, queries, and changing numbers. By the time we climbed up the steps and made our way down the thin corridor straddling the worn, burgundy coloured seats, all the spaces towards the front of the bus had been taken and, so, Lauren and I positioned ourselves at the back of the bus where we could watch what was going on. As the coach weaved its way through Belfast rush hour traffic, navigating a route that would take us from north Belfast to east Belfast, Peter took his place at the front of the coach and, hung onto the headrest of a chair for stability. He began speaking about the history of murals in Belfast is his low, monotone drawl that I had become accustomed to hearing, if not wholly at ease with. Being an expert on murals, Peter's words elegantly discussed the different genres of murals found in Belfast – Loyalist murals, Republican murals, and peace murals – and navigated the long history of wall painting in the context of Northern Ireland, highlighting the temporally dynamic nature of this activity. The whole bus was gazing at Peter and, out of the corner of my eye, there was a hand running back and forth across a lined notebook as it sought to capture keywords and phrases. Peter's carefully pitched words held the gaze of the listening bodies, subtly demanding the attention of their ears. Rarely had I seen the ladies so quiet and engaged.

Constantly navigating Belfast on foot, I was not familiar with our route from north Belfast to south Belfast. Before long we were making our way around a formidable, large roundabout and I suddenly knew where we were. Bypassing Short Strand, we entered the Newtownards Road, the main corridor of east Belfast, and soon pulled up on the right-hand side. The Newtownards Road is a long, linear stretch of tarmac I know well, having walked up and down it four times a week for the past ten months as I made my way to and from the Skainos Building, where Turas is located. It is a space with a clear identity: suspended Union Jacks blow softly in the wind; the curbs and lampposts boast white, red and blue; and the walls are dotted with red poppies and the Red Hand of Ulster. After ten months of being in this space and with my English accent offering a reassuring and full proof disguise, the Newtownards Road is somewhere I have come – at least in daylight – to feel relatively comfortable. However, as I make my way up and down it, I tend to walk quickly and with my head down, only daring to give the painted walls a quick, sharp glimpse – to stop and stare would be to highlight I don't belong in this space. However, with the security of a group, I was now going to have the time to slowly move along the gallery walls.

Clambering off the bus to many comments of "he's good isn't he" as eyes gesture towards Peter, we were all soon crowded around the exposed end façade of a row of terrace houses facing the 'Ship of Dreams' (see figure 16). Dedicated to the Titanic and east Belfast's shipbuilding legacy, Peter informed how this mural was designed as part of a re-imaging project that sought the removal of sectarian images displayed at the Short Strand-Newtownards Road interface. We stood gazing up at the massive boat and its

Figure. 16. The Ship of Dreams on the Newtownards Road, east Belfast, visited on the mural tour as part of the CTS's training programme addressing the legacies of the Troubles (author's own, October 9th 2017).*

infamous four pillars, an image that commemorated Titanic as both a feat of Northern Irish engineering and as a great international disaster.

With the wind picking up and a chill begin to creep into our bodies through our exposed hand and heads, we followed Peter further along the gallery wall. Soon we were facing a series of images that had been curated to appear together. These murals were colourful; they were engaging and invited the eye to explore the story, the different shapes and shades. These images did not aim to intimidate and display a powerful marking of claimed space but, instead, advanced a message of peace and a proud celebration of the local culture (see figure 17). They aimed to express a positive message through bright, uplifting colours, outstretched arms, and peaceful words.

As we continued along the road, leaving the interface and moving into the heart of east Belfast, we entered another section of the gallery. The images staring down at us were notably different. The colours bleeding down the walls were almost exclusively red, white, royal blue, and black (see figure 18). Red poppies, the red hand, and red crosses drew in the eye. The black, bold branding of ***UFF****,* ***EAST BELFAST****, and* ***LOYALIST*** *marked the walls, as both the image and the author. There is no need to accompany the*

Figure. 17. The ladies on the mural tour staring up at a reimaged mural at the Newtownards Road-Short Strand interface. Reimaging projects seek to replace offensive murals, usually located as interfaces, with images of hope and peace (author's own, October 9th 2017).

Figure. 18. Loyalist and Unionist murals on the Newtownards Road seen on the mural tour (author's own, October 9th 2017).

hanging images with an explanatory and informative didactic – the message is clear; it is driven directly into the eyes and there can be only one interpretation. This is British, Loyalist, Protestant territory. The words inscribed in the mural inform our staring eyes that the war continues and will be maintained: we will be held in this stasis until we are triumphant. The messages and images of peace, of hope, and of love we have just seen fade away – they belong to a different world, to a future time.

Continuing further along the Newtownards Road we no longer move as a single group but wonder the exhibition at our own pace. We move into another section of the gallery and the narrative, told by the very brick and mortar holding east Belfast together, continues. The gallery walls have been drained of colour, and I come to an abrupt stop as balaclaved men supporting guns stare directly down, piercing my body with their black gaze (see figure 19). Whilst other women stand around engaged in light-hearted chatter, I am unable to stop staring at the dark scene before my eyes. The black darkness of the paint spreads into the atmosphere, it washes over my body, and it stills movement with apprehension and uncase: an unease that until now, and when navigating these streets unaccompanied, has prevented my gaze rising and meeting with the eyes of the shielded face staring down.

Figure. 19. UVF mural on the Newtownards Road (author's own January 23rd 2017).

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We were moving from east Belfast to west Belfast, from Protestant territory to Catholic territory. We had gazed up at walls that had already been marked as Protestant and now we would be gazing up at walls already recognised as Catholic.[56]

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Whether or not it was because it was closer to what I 'know', I find the murals of west Belfast much less intimidating. Guns do not haunt the images, and faceless men do not penetrate the body through narrow eyeholes. The words that met my eyes were not threatening. Paramilitary images did not meet my eye, I did not read messages of ownership and control. I did not feel the flying of the tricolour to be a constructed, powerful act of claiming space. The Gaelic etched into the bricks was not a mark of Republicanism and the harp was not playing an intimidating tune. The celebrations dancing upon the walls were not alien, the smile of Bobby Sands was not menacing, and the story of the Easter Rising was not my nightmare. Standing on Divis Street, my gaze is willingly drawn in, keen to explore the engaging sea of colour.

After staring at the murals on Divis Street for some time (see figure 20), we slowly began to make our way back to the coach, who we had arranged to meet on Northumberland Street. Northumberland Street

Figure. 20. Having travelled from east Belfast to west Belfast, Peter now talked the group through the infamous murals on Divis Street (author's own, October 9th 2017).

[56] Prior to cross-community contact bodies, territory, and culture are a priori aligned to mass, essentialised categories of being. With bodies already defined, contact then becomes about meeting and relating to the already recognised Protestant body or Catholic body. This was demonstrated by Director of Good Relations when we discussed the United Youth Programme: "*One of the fundamental parts of the training programme that we are delivering is that before these young people can take their place in a work place they have to first learn to deal with good relations issues, because if I can't relate to you as a Catholic or a Protestant how am I going to be able to work, how am I going to be able to operate in a working environment, in a respectful and productive way.*".

connects Divis Street, which turns into the infamous Falls Road, to the Shankill Road, the Protestant area of west Belfast. These link roads were 'flashpoints' areas for violence both during the Troubles and today, mitigated through the erection and maintenance of peace walls.

I was ambling along the road in a loose huddle with Jasmine, Lauren, and a couple of the other ladies. As was usual for these visits, the pace of movement was slow while the gossiping and chatting was fast. Ears were drawn away from the current conversation as they attuned to the sound of quick, light footsteps approaching behind. As I was turning my head towards the attention-grabbing sound, one of the older ladies on the trip – a tiny, little woman – came almost running past, with her right-hand firmly gripping on to handbag as it was clutch tight under her other arm. She was walking much quicker than the rest of us. Her posture was stiff, and you could feel the tension that was radiating out from her body. As soon as she crossed the threshold of the Cupar Way peace wall (see figure 21), you heard her let out a big sigh and saw the tight tension fall away as a calmness washed, almost instantly and visibly, over her body.

Figure. 21. The peace wall on the Northumberland Street, dividing Catholic Divis Street and the Falls Road from the Protestant Shankill area. The gates are opened Monday to Saturday at 6.30am and closed at 6.30pm, and on a Sunday the gate is open from 10.00am until 3.00pm (Google Maps 2018: n.p.).

*I was taken aback when, now in 'safe' territory, I heard her exclaim how she had found the murals on this side much more threatening than the murals we have viewed on the Newtownards Road. When Jasmine queried as to why, she exclaimed: "they were so menacing, the guns, and the '**END BRITISH RULE**' slogan, the call to '**SMASH STORMONT**', the tricolour, the Gaelic." Staring up at the murals on Divis Road, after having crossed from the Protestant territory of east Belfast into Catholic west Belfast, the body's attention was already caught by the telling of its communal enveloping. The body activated eyes which had already seen. Guns were recognised in the hands they were expected to be held. Republican language came from the mouths in which it was destined to belong. The tricolour powerfully claimed a wall which was already*

categorised as foreign. Now having crossed the peace wall and returned to the comfort of her rooted territory, the body once again felt safe. The fear that was visibly consuming her body had dissipated.

Beyond Jasmine's brief query of 'why', there was no space-time to explore the immediate feelings and sensations elicited from meeting with unfamiliar histories, cultures and traditions. There was, as always, a pressing need to attend to what was happening next. We needed to get the ladies back onto the bus and to the next destination, making sure they were at the right place at the right time. The images were recognised as menacing and rather than staying with discomfort, wherein there is the potential 'to break out of fixed patterns of interaction' as the body moves beyond an activity of recognition (see Mayblin, Valentine and Anderson 2016: 214), the body simply turned its back and ran.

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I was becoming acutely aware facilitating site visits was an act of organisation, opposed to guiding dialogue in the exploration of feelings, and the posing of questions. Within the accompanying class-room sessions I knew there would be time built in for this exploration and, as Lauren once explained to me, "the ladies set the pace of these sessions not us and if that means five more evening then we'll be here for those five extra evenings". Yet, as I sat on the back of the bus heading to the next destination, I knew when it came to the built-in time for exploration the event and sensation of contact would be lost; the wall, the murals, the other are already cemented as menacing and inherited truths, animosities, and identities have already been confirmed as the body falls back on dualistic comparisons of calm versus fear, threat versus comfort, us versus them (Valentine 2008). The very event of contact is reduced, relegated as an issue for later, and the body is left with few options but to draw upon what it already knows.

Cross-community work starts from the stasis of 'what is' and ends in the stasis of 'what is'.

Based on research journal, October 9th 2017

Breathing Encounters

6.1 Introduction

Sharing has been at the forefront of the Northern Irish Peace Process. Sharing is conceived by Northern Ireland's political elites as the outcome of a united, peaceful future that has left behind violent cultural divisions and sectarian territorialisation. The goal of peace resides in creating a shared society, a shared future, a shared country, and a power-sharing government for the united community of Northern Ireland. Although at the forefront of the Peace Process, sharing is an ambiguous term devoid of reference to tangible implementation strategies and distinct social and public policy priorities (see Darby and Knox 2004; Graham and Nash 2005; Hughes 2007; Knox 2011a; Marijan 2015; O'Kane 2013).[57] Surrounded by ambiguity, both ideologically and practically, sharing has been framed within a host of other terms – tolerance, respect, understanding, unity, integration, inclusion, cohesion, and, arguably most notably, equality – which culminate in the recurring and principal mantra of the Executive's frameworks for peace: 'a shared and better future for us all' (Robinson and McGuiness 2010: 2).

Peace in Northern Ireland has become a management problem, opposed to a political problem. Despite its very real achievements, the Good Friday Agreement negotiated a politics of peace devoid of movement. Peace and its possibilities have been reduced to a territorialising stasis that simply maintains 'what is' – the management of the prevailing presence of segregation prefiguring the territory, lived reality, and everyday body of Northern Ireland – albeit less violently. The Catholic-Protestant binary is today managed through a rhetoric of equality that pursues 'parity of cultural esteem between the 'two traditions'' (Sluka 2009: 292), and acutely in relation to the ongoing 'cultural wars'[58] concentrated broadly around flags, parades and marches, bonfires, and language rights (Garry et al. 2018; Nolan 2014; Wilson 2016). This agenda has historically been tied to the advent of good relations,[59] which was

[57] The ambiguity surrounding sharing was expressed in a conversation I had with the Director of Good Relations: "*A few months ago we had a discussion with our staff, the staff who are involved in delivering good relations, around this concept of shared space, neutral space, dead space. I occupy it today you occupy it tomorrow does that make it shared or do we need to occupy it at the same time? Do we need to be doing the same things? So you know there are lots of challenges out there as to what we mean by sharing, particularly around shared space.*"

[58] Although problematics with the term cannot be ignored (see McDaid et al. 2013), referring to persistent cultural contestations through the term 'war' illustrates how, even when mass physical violence has long stopped, there is a continuation of conflict 'by other means' (Meredith 2017: n.p.): through zero-sum games of cultural contestation that continue to disfigure the potential for sharing (Tongue and Gomez's 2015).

[59] Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act set out the responsibility of the OFDFM regarding equality and the promotion of good relations.

Section 75 Northern Ireland Act 1998

(1) A public authority shall, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity.

(a) between persons of different religious belief, political opinion, racial group, age, marital status or sexual orientation;

(b) between men and women generally;

(c) between persons with a disability and persons without;

(d) between persons with dependents and persons without.

reiterated when the 2013 TBUC strategy established an Equality and Good Relations Commission (see OFMDF 2015). Cross-community contact, as the foundation of good relations, is the principal activity of peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding overwhelmingly resides in creating spaces of cross-community and cross-cultural contact. Yet, engineered contact works within the present horizon of Catholic or Protestant: bodies are determined in advance as Catholic or Protestant and, then, meet as Catholic or Protestant. Contact does not aim to change the terms of the horizon but, rather, seeks to moves from verticality to horizontality, from oppositional difference to common, mutual sameness. This horizon views difference as the irreducible problem, which equality seeks to negate through either (equal) separation[60] or, preferably, through the engineering of a totalising and common whole (equivalence), both of which leave no room for sharing in-between.[61] Removing the shared space of the in-between is the very suffocation of living (Marder 2016), of transformation, and of world-making. Opposed to transforming perceptions, relations, and doings of difference, the Peace Process works within the current horizon but displaces the irreducible problem of difference with equality.

A vision of equality, when combined with good relations and reconciliation, can be politically engineered to create the perception that sectarianism is being challenged (Graham and Nash 2006). In reality, equality simply manages sectarianism to be less violent. The Peace Process has been a process of managing two divided communities within the continuing, if less-than-violent, horizon of 'separate but equal' (Knox 2011a; McDowell, Braniff and Murphy 2017; Nagle 2009), or 'benign apartheid' (Graham and Nash 2006: 273). Management has largely prevented the return of large-scale violence (Knox and Quirk 2016), but it fails to animate an atmosphere of change and inspiration for the creation of an alternative, shared future wherein violence and division are not originary.

The creation of an alternative horizon, in which peace emerges autonomously from structures of violence, requires a return to elemental and ontological commitments, to those dynamic, constituting forces that make possible territorialising identities and their spatio-temporal segregations. This alternative horizon depends fundamentally – *elementally* – on more dynamic processes than stasis can realise. It is not enough to recognise the need for shared worlds. The path to sharing is still lacking. Shared worlds need to be invented, discovered, and created (Irigaray 2017); they require the making of a new horizon respiring

(2) Without prejudice to its obligation under subsection (1), a public authority shall, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, have regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

[60] In conversation with Irigaray, Marder (2016: 133, original emphasis) articulates the disjuncture between sharing and division: "the difference between the two is that *sharing life and breath augments and enhances the sphere of the living, whereas dividing life into the so-called natural or human resources diminishes it*."

[61] I am not suggesting we should give up on equality (see Thiele 2014b). Yet, I am arguing against an equality produced from within the terms of 'what is' and from an externalised position of universal moral norms and values. We need a conception of equality, and relatedly of sharing and coexistence, irreducible to the principle of separate but equal or to the sameness of equivalence. This necessitates the transformation of our current identarian horizon and the essentialised categories of commonness it produces.

in-between. The in-between cannot be animated in contact always-already framed within a Catholic-Protestant horizon. Rather, the making of the in-between respires with encounters taking place in a sharing of breath.

Encountering the other in breath is the making of a shared interval, a third spacing, folding in-between the inside and the outside. The interval is not the reduction of difference to separation or equivalence. In the third spacing, difference is neither denied nor framed as a violent dualism but conceptualised and experienced as the very moment in which living vitality moves within a reciprocal sharing. Sharing, then, is not simply the outcome of the encounter; it is also the activity of such an encounter. Sharing become expressive in the event of touching upon relational limits in-between (Manning 2011, 2013). Sharing cannot be constructed from a vision of equality within the order of 'what is'. Nor can sharing be cultivated in neutral spaces or spaces of mixed contact. The advent of shared worlds resides in micropolitical relations that are always-already moving within the shared, generative space of the in-between; within emerging encounters happening in-between a sharing of breath.

This chapter moves with the everyday, breathy encounters in the space of Turas to trace the extant happenings of this space and the expressions of shared worlds as they emerge. As previously discussed, Irigaray's thinking provides three key concepts for thinking through the encounter: wonder, silence, and sharing. The chapter, then, is split into three sections that trace these three concepts within Turas, with the discussion of wonder beginning with a brief discussion on listening-to, which I argue is the dominant activity of Turas. Approaching the encounter as a relation of differentiation in proximity, these three concepts are woven together through the practice of breathing, and the relational limits felt when the other is encountered in a sharing of breath. I conceive of the encounter, of dynamic relations of differentiation in proximity, as a generative spacing that transcends the divisions and territorialisation pervading identity politics and its normal political process by animating a novel horizon folding in-between. Moving with breath we can begin to trace how alternative spatialisations of the political are being woven and, so, prospectives for creating peace. This chapter concludes with a discussion of the alternative horizon created in encounters of breath – a horizon created not in the equivalence of contact but from dynamic, if speculative, aerial ecologies of emerging relations.

6.2 Listening-To *Gaelige's* Wonder

The process of learning is an activity of hearing. It is an aspiration for knowledge, reasoning, and comprehension in a desire to master the language and, ultimately, become fluent. Mobilising the French verb *entendre*, Jean-Luc Nancy (2007) ties hearing to understanding. In the context of language learning, understanding resides in fluency whereby a truth is imposed upon what is heard (Gallope 2008). Hearing, thus, suggests a sonorous form of a complete, perceptible 'body' that can be heard as knowable, identifiable, and consistent. Hearing is an activity conforming to the logic that the whole can be known, the body can attain a position of accomplished understanding wherein nothing remains,

nothing is left over, as everything is captured in complete transparency extraneous to the living (Gilbert and Pearson 1999; Irigaray 1993a; Irigaray 2016). Undoubtedly the focus of the classes at Turas, particularly in the more advanced classes, resides in gaining knowledge of Gaelic vocabulary and a grammatical understanding of the Irish language. Yet, I would argue hearing and understanding are not the predominant activities of the space. Bodies turn towards Turas not for understanding and knowledge, but with a felt curiosity. For these bodies Turas is less a space of understanding and more a space of listening-to.

Turas is a Gaelic word meaning journey or pilgrimage. The journey Turas offers is not predetermined and the primary focus does not reside in progression and achievement. In contrast to the small numbers advancing to a high level and 'progressing' through the trajectory of class levels at a predetermined pace, it is far more common for people to attend the same class, for example the beginners class or the post-beginners class, for two if not three years. Partly this can be put down to people starting at Turas throughout the year.[62] Without a full year of engaging with the language, moving up to a post-beginners or intermediate class when the new academic year begins can feel too soon. Yet, this is only part of the story.[63] The tendency to stay at the same level – displayed also in the willingness and desire to become involved with the wider community of Turas, such as the choir or Irish dancing classes, walking with Turas in the St. Patrick Day Parade, attending talks and events, or supporting the project through volunteering in some way – illustrates how the space of Turas does not reside wholly, or even primarily, in the development of understanding but in *something else*. As Áine articulates:

> *It's that sense of realising it's not just about learning a language, it's not just about getting the words right or understanding how to form the genitive or some ghastly thing like that, it's actually, there's something else going on.*

This something else moves in excess of comprehension. It moves prior to and beyond understanding and knowledge, before the imposition of recognition and form. It moves not with the suprasensitive[64] process of hearing, but with a sensuous and embodied listening-to.[65]

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[62] Linda is keen to create an open and accessible pathway into the Irish language and to move with, rather than quash, curiosity. Thus, while most learners start at the beginning of the academic year, new learners are welcomed at any point.

[63] It is important here to note the relationship between education and socio-economic status. East Belfast is a working-class area and Turas seeks to be a local project offering a space and activity for the local community. Although Turas is financially accessible, Linda often articulates a large challenge Turas faces is the fear of education and learning in working-class communities: "*there's a class issue here with an educational issue and the working class ones are the first ones you lose, because they, they find it very difficult to learn, they're very intimidated by learning and I know, umm, do you know when we brought in exam classes, they were terrified*." Thus, potentially, some learners opt to stay at the same level, at a level they know and feel comfortable, due to the fear of advancing and not being able to cope. Whilst I would not want to refute this and the intention of my research was not to explore this, I would suggest this reading does not counter the argument I am constructing regarding Turas being a space of listening and wonder.

[64] Irigaray (see 2008a, 2015c, 2015c, 2016, 2017, 2019) advances the term suprasensitive to refer to ideals, truths, values, and experiences constructed external to the sensing body, and its affects and relations, which work within the destabilising realm of absolutes.

[65] Irigaray (1996: 110) mobilises the preposition 'to' as a 'barrier against alienating the other's freedom in my subjectivity, my world, my language.' She uses the 'to' most commonly in her neologism 'I love to you', but she also

Nancy (2007) determines listening *(écouter)* to be a distinct experience from hearing *(entendre)*. Whilst *entendre* seeks a closure of understanding and truth, *écouter* moves with touch, uncertainty, and exposure. Listening does not aim for the comprehension, regulation, and reasoning of meaning. And it exceeds both coding and systematisation. As Stephen Pluháček (2002: 51) writes: 'to cultivate listening requires that we do more than hear a message in terms already established by society or coded by language.' The Irish language brings together letters in an unfamiliar manner, the structuring of sentences is strange, and the grammar alien. Opposed to encountering Gaelic in its written form, classes at Turas revolve around listening-to the sounds, shapes, and movements of the Irish language.

> *My breath alters as I frantically and with great intensity listen to the sounds coming from each body…"ta"…all my focus lies with the sound, on the movement of word through the mouth, as I seek to build up the sentence sound by sound…"ta", "may", "ta may"…I am acutely aware of decreasing number of bodies to my left, the question will soon land at my body where it will be my voice, the sounds I create, that will hang in the air…three people. I am not processing how each person is feeling. I am not hearing "go maith" (good), "go breá" (fine), "go holc" (bad), or "go measartha" (middling), but listening to the sounds in their creation: "moy", "g", "br-a", "mass-ara". The next word is coming, listen closely… "g-moy", "g'moy", "ta may g-moy". I've got the phrase and now, on a continuous loop, the four sounds go round and round my body…"ta may g-moy, ta may g-moy, ta may g-moy"…I feel the shapes of the words and listen for the short sharp outlet of breath through a pursed mouth to form the "g" and the slower spread of the "mmmmoooy" over the lip as the they widen with the shape of the sound.*
>
> Research journal, January 17th 2017

Words are encountered not through letters but in the sounds and shapes of letter, accents, and syllables. I was touching upon and exploring the sounds of Gaelic prior to the imposition of understanding and comprehension.

Although lessons vary from teacher to teacher, rarely at Turas was I confronted with the Irish language in its written form. Even when the words were written down, scribbled on the white board or staring at us from a handout, it was always after the sounds and shapes of the words had been listened-to. Then when we got the word, when we finally got to see the word as it was represented in Gaelic, it would be immediately lost underneath a jumble of illogical letters voicing the sound and shape of the words as they touched upon the ear and moved through the mouth (see figure 22). David, who had only been attending classes for a couple of weeks, expresses how Turas perceives and mobilises words in their sound.

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explains how the 'to' is a silence that enables a listening to the other: 'I am listening to you prepares the way from the not-yet-coded, for silence, for a space for existence, initiative, free intentionality, and support for your becoming' (Irigaray 1996: 117). Thus, I approach listening as a listening-to where the 'to' is an illustration of silence (Malabou and Ziarek 2012), of an actively-passive spacing which, as will be made clear, is necessary to move with the wonder and mystery of the encounter.

It is very, very difficult, umm, I, I keep on learning the pronunciation for a set phrase like how are you, or something like that, err, and yet when I see it written, umm, I don't recognise it because I'm trying to, err, put it out phonetically.

With phonetic description proceeding representational form, Turas is a space not composed from acts of recognition. The Irish words are not met with a recognition permeating them with meaning. The absence of recognition illustrates there is something else going on.

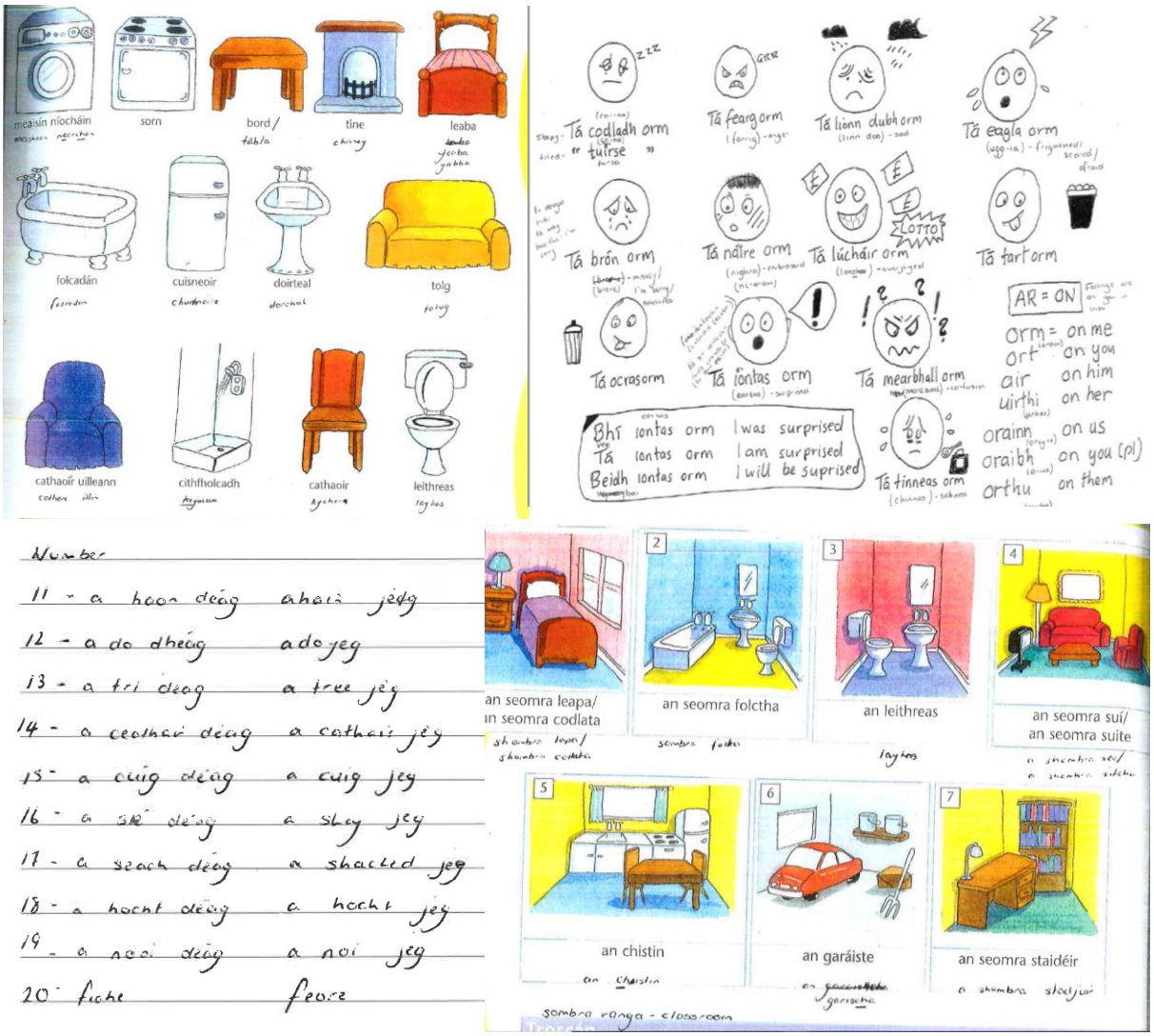

Figure. 22. Examples of annotated handouts and the numbers one to ten from my Irish language notebook, displaying how the written Gaelic was immediately voiced in a jumble of letter that sought to depict the sound and shapes of words (author's own).

The jumble of letter proceeding, and exceeding, the unrecognisable written representation composes words with no language like meaning – English or Gaelic. They are a jumble of letters encompassing an embodied and emerging encounter that listens-to 'something other than sense in its signifying sense' (Nancy 2007: 32). They are words that are alive (Kohn 2013). Meaning and comprehension always

came after sounds were listened-to and felt in their movement. Words were not approached with the desire to capture them in a determined meaning, to pin them down within the confines of comprehension – a comprehension which could only every been the imposition of meaning from within the English language. In the Turas classrooms bodies listen-to something at or beyond the limits of signification (Macpherson et al. 2016), wherein words are followed in the moving shapes of sound.

Listening-to is a creative act that destabilises frames of normative significance, the workings of standardised truths, and the habitual activity of communal representation. The Irish language cannot be encountered through an English ear or English eye; it cannot be known from the English language, from the linguistic structure in which the Protestant body dwells. As David expressed later in our conversation: "*umm, you've just got to alienate yourself from English and from every other language that you might have learned.*" Listening-to the sounds of Irish language animates what David describes as an alienation from the norm. Alienation and destabilisation cultivate an opening from which the body is exposed to what is unknown and different (Gallope 2008); an opening onto wonder.

Irigaray mobilises a conception of wonder in dialogue, at least initially, with Rene Descartes.[66] Descartes (1989) regards wonder as the first and primary emotion. Wonder moves prior to judgements of good, bad, or use (Irigaray 1993a), and before a judgement of being (la Caze 2002). The fullness of wonder precedes the imposition of hierarchy (Bordo 1999) and representation, opening the body to both surprise and mystery. In Turas bodies are engaged in an act of listening-to mysterious words and surprising sounds, as they encounter and touch the Irish language and the very 'advent or event of the other' (Irigaray 1993a: 75). Wonder testifies to the perpetual rebirth in an ongoing encounter (R. Jones 2011), as the other is met 'as if for the first time' (Irigaray 1993a: 13). In wonder we do not project our self-understanding onto the other but approach the other in a recurring openness, wherein there is the potential for the other to surprise us over and over again. Surprises are felt in listening-to how the letter 'b' and the letter 'h' come together to make a 'w' sound, and in feeling how 'g' can be moved before 'c' in an act of eclipsing. They are felt in touching upon the poetic imagery of the language, as the body listens-to how there is no direct, singular word for engagement but the description 'between hand and ring', and in feeling how hair is not 'my hair' but the 'hair that is on me'. These surprises compose the everyday space of Turas and resonate throughout the body, as something appears novel or different from what we previously knew or presupposed it to be. These moments of surprise are most tangible is discussing the relationship between *Gaeilge* and *Béarla*.

[66] Descartes philosophy is firmly grounded within Cartesian dualism, and his conception of wonder works within this framework. Although Irigaray's thinking moves with Descartes conception of wonder, she uses Descartes own insights on wonder as a means of challenging his philosophy. Irigaray's wonder undoes the foundational oppositions through which Descartes thinks wonder, and animates a wonder that is sensual, carnal, affective, and sensible (see Groen 2016; Irigaray 1993a; R. Jones 2011).

Moving against inherited truths and polarising narratives, Turas have developed a Hidden History presentation voicing the connections and influences in-between Irish Gaelic, Scots Gaelic, and the Ulster dialect.[67] Linda and Gareth are invited across Belfast, and further afield, to deliver this presentation in various settings, whilst also presenting them at events held by Turas and in the beginner's classes. Linda voices the wonder that engulfs the room during the presentation.

> *...a lot of the words, you know, we use all those words clabber, dulse, shebeen, you know, I never knew they were Irish, I never thought, you know, it never struck me that there was anything different about these words or, you know, that they didn't, that they weren't English. But, umm, and suddenly when you put it into context and you realise, oh my goodness, you know, it is, it is quite amazing, it really is... I mean I see it with people with Hidden History all the time, their chins just drop and, umm…you know it's like goodness we never knew that, I never, oh why didn't nobody ever tell us that before and you know, the only Irish I ever knew was "chucky ar la"[68] you know, they just don't know that anything else exists. You know, they had this strange idea of the language, you know, everybody who speaks it is in the IRA, you know, they don't know that other world and all of a sudden you're just opening up and saying look, listen.*

Linda's description of the dropping of chins voices a physical manifestation of the wondrous surprise affecting bodies listening-to a narrative differing from inherited truths asserting Irish and English as two separate, bordered worlds in an antagonistic opposition.

The dropping of chins is indicative of a bodily interruption, a small shock or moment of disruption where in the body is immediately, and at once, brought-to-face with contingency (Grosz 2004: Wilson 2013), as it encounters words and phrase that have always been spoken. Surprising interruptions are felt in the halting movement of breath. They are interruptions in which there is, if only for a moment, an embodied conscious of one's own breath, as the movement of inhalation and exhalation faults in its habitual rhythm. This fault undoes worlds and turns cultures upside down as inherited codes are reversed and predetermined habits broken. It asks 'us to turn back the way that we have been taught, unlearning words that designate things or people and the manner according to which the totality of the world, especially the world of knowledge, has been constituted' (Irigaray 2017: 66). The bodies affected with

[67] The Hidden History presentation works through several and words common to these three languages and explores the relations between them. In addition, it delves into local place names and traces their Gaelic roots, explaining how they were anglicised in the 1820s Ordnance Survey. For example, the colour yellow in Irish is buí (bwee) but was anglicised to 'boy' and features in many different place names, such as Cloughboy and Letter Boy. Other common words featuring in place names are mór (big), beag (small), baile (town which became bally) and carraig (rock which was anglicised to carrick), resulting in places such as Carrickbeg meaning little rock or Ballymore meaning big town.

[68] *Tiocfaidh ár lá*, pronounced by Unionist and a large proportion of the Protestant community as 'chucky ar la', is Irish Gaelic for 'our day will come'. The slogan is broadly associated with the Catholic, Nationalist, and Republican community and has close link to: the IRA's violent campaign during the Troubles; Sinn Féin's Nationalist politics; the use of Irish among imprisoned Republicans; Nationalist and Republican murals; and the conviction of IRA member, where it has been used as a statement of rebuttal. More recently, Mary Lou McDonald used the phrase in her inaugural speech as Sinn Féin president in 2018. McDonald's use of the phrase was criticised across the island of Ireland, with many suggesting it was an ill-judged choice considering the failure to re-establish power sharing at Stormont and the dark memories contained in the words for the Northern Irish people (McQuinn 2018).

wonder are not those who are judging whether the relation between Gaelic and the English language is suitable for the body as it has been determined a priori. They are not those fighting to understand Gaelic in its entirety or those reducing the Irish language to the singular phase 'tocfaidh ár lá', to a Republican label, and to a threatening voice. They are not those who are seeking to own words and phrase, to consume and embed them in one tradition or to dispel them to the unnatural place of the other. Wonder animates a distancing from the familiarity and comfort of learnt codes but, as Irigaray illustrates, this distancing is always double.

The resounding interruption of wonder jars the body 'into motion' (Connolly 2002: 113). It fills the body with the liveliness of the present (Bennett 2001) and expands one's field of vision and touch (Ahmed 2004). To be affected by wonder, it to have ones 'nerves or circulation, or concentration powers turned up or recharged' (Bennett 2001: 5) – the bodies leaning forwards into the presentation eager to listen to more, the ones who on listening-to the words and tones of Irish hold these in their mouth and feel their unfamiliar movement, the bodies responding in surprised interjections of "*oh wow*" and excited exclamation of "*my daddy used to say that*" *(Research Journal January 23rd 2017)*. The liveliness of wonder animates openness to difference (la Caze 2002), as well as welcoming 'the future openly' (Grosz 2005: 166). This is not to 'open the other up' (Groen 2016) but to awaken the passion, appetites, and attractions of the body as it listen-to what is 'beyond all knowledge, all judgement, all reduction to ourselves' (Irigaray 2002a: 124), to 'that which is not yet (en)coded' (Irigaray 1993a: 75).[69]

To encounter the other in wonder, is to encounter a body as unknown. Yet, Irigaray (2002b: 164) illustrates how, when our senses are turned up and energy is charged, 'we can indirectly perceive something of' this difference. This perception, however, cannot be directly associated with an organ or object a priori, as wonder always escapes control to become more. Here, is the second distancing of the double gesture Irigaray (2017: 65) gives voice to: a distancing from the 'sensory or sensitive experience, of an empathy or intensely close meeting of the world in the present.' How the encounter will affect the body cannot be predicted or held within a habitual sense modality. As Josie voices, the wondering of the body cannot always be articulated or known following the encounter:

> *Oh, I mean it's… I don't know ummm I don't think I had any set opinion of the Irish language to start out with, I, it's a language and it's something, a challenge to learn, it umm…I suppose I don't think it's altered my opinion as I didn't know much about it to start off with, it's sort of opening my mind a lot…I suppose maybe in a way its changed umm…no I am not really sure, I'm getting all confused now. But umm no it's an interesting language to learn.*

[69] Concerns have been expressed regarding the danger of Irigaray's conception of wonder. Laced with Irigaray's thinking around difference, Iris Marion Young (1997) proposes wonder can be employed to present and imagine the other as exotic and, in turn, legitimate an investigative and probing approach towards the other. Such as approach converts openness into a desire for knowledge, understanding, and mastery. These criticisms, however, do not consider how Irigaray's conception of wonder draws from Descartes but in a movement that is turned back on him. Thus, whilst this may be a founded criticism of Descartes, Irigaray's conception of wonder challenge this very potential by animating not exoticism but an alternative way of relating to the other (Groen 2016) moving with a 'transcendence that remains *within* the sensible world' (R. Jones 2011: 113, original emphasis).

Here, Josie suggests her encounter with the Irish language is the becoming of change in which the body is carried away in a kind of opening. Yet, locating this change in a specific place cannot always been comprehended, even if it is felt. An indirect perception of difference, moving in the event of wonder, is not the activity of a habitual sense modality, wherein there is a risk of paralysis. Rather, it is what Manning (2013: 5) refers to as 'amodality': a foregrounding not of 'the sense itself but its relational potential' in the present. Wonder, as the experience of difference, does not reside in a singular body but within relational ecologies in the making.

Wonder is the creation of a new relation that cannot be approached in term of hierarchical division and separation nor equal sameness. Wonder is not simply a movement in one direction, a movement towards the self or the other. Rather, 'wonder is the motivating force behind mobility is all its dimensions' (Irigaray 1993a: 73). It is a relational movement active in-between, animating an "opening' or 'interval through which…[bodies] may relate in their irreducible difference' (R. Jones 2011: 113) and, crucially, grow and blossom in this relation. Wonder, here, is not '*I* am wondering' but 'where does this movement wonder me', wonder us, and wonder worlds (Manning 2013: 167, original emphasis). Wonder, then, does not conform a wholly autonomous act of self-generation, but 'confirms the creative movement of birth repeated in encounters between two who are irreducibly different' (R. Jones 2011: 113). To be affected by wonder is to already be in relation. A relation moving with the silence of breath. It is this silence that we now breathe with.

6.3 Respiring a Relational Silence

Sos was slowly drawing to a close and everyone was returning to their seats now full of tea, coffee, and biscuits. Before sos, we were once again going through the Shan and Nora story: "D'éirigh Nóra ar a seacht a'chlog. Shiubhail sí go dtí an seomra folcaidh agus a h-aghaidh agus a muineál. Chuir sí uirthi a cuid éadagih agus shuibhail sí síos a'staighre ahus isteach go dtí 'n chisteanach. Arís. Arís. Arís. Arís. In the run up to sos attention had begun to wander – the lady opposite me was doodling on the lined piece of paper before her, hazy eyes gaze around the room, another gentleman had become preoccupied with his phone, replies were given in a monotone voice and, as a collective, we had been doing our very best to distract Sinead and set her off on a completely unrelated topic: the Irish Language Act, nanna Pat, 'curry my yogurt', the suspension of Stormont, anything to prevent another rendition of Shan and Nora's morning routine. Sensing the all too obvious dissolution with Shan and Nora, the second half of the class was focussed upon a children's song about a 'beautiful yellow teddy bear' who, after falling in the park and hurting his head and hand, had to be visited by the doctor.

During sos, and in an unprecedented movement, Sinead had squiggled the words of the song across the two white boards that stood at the front of the room.

Teidí beag álainn, teidí beag buí,
Thit sé sa pháirc agus tá sé an-tinn.
Tá sé ina leaba bheag, tá sé ina luí,
Teidí beag álainn, teidí beag buí.
Ghortaigh sé a cheann agus ghortaigh sé a shúil,
Ghortaigh sé a lámh agus ghortaigh sé a ghlúin.
Tá sé ina leaba bheag, tá sé ina luí,
Teidí beag álainn, teidí beag buí.
Tháinig an dochtúir i gcarr chun an tí.
"Cá bhfuil teidí beag, teidí beag buí?"
Tá sé ina leaba bheag, tá sé ina luí,
Teidí beag álainn, teidí beag buí.
D'fhéach sé ar a cheann agus d'fhéach sé ar a shúil,
D'fhéach sé ar a lámh agus d'fhéach sé ar a ghlúin,
Tá sé ina leaba bheag, tá sé ina luí,
Teidí beag álainn, teidí beag buí.

To begin with Sinead voiced each line one at a time and, first, asked if we could pick out any familiar words. Tentative guesses were called out: "Well…doesn't páirc mean park"; "Buí is a colour isn't it, yellow it think"; "Cá bhfuil is also used when asking where do you live, but in this context maybe where is teddy bear?"; and "I recognise the word lámh from the Shana and Nora story but I don't know what it means." After we had worked out what was happening in a verse, following the usual pattern, Sinead voiced the sounds and shapes of each line and, as a class, we repeated. We were slowly building up the song line by line, verse by verse.

Sinead: "Teidí beag álainn... Arís"	*The class: "Teidí beag álainn"*
Sinead: "teidí beag buí... Arís"	*The class: "teidí beag buí"*
Sinead: "Teidí beag álainn, teidí beag buí... Arís"	*The class: "Teidí beag álainn, teidí beag buí"*

As we went through the song, angled between the white boards and the rest of the classroom, Sinead moved her hand along the line pointing to the corresponding word as it was voiced. Many of us were preoccupied writing down words and phrases in our notebooks that lay on the desks in front of us. Rarely in Sinead's class are we presented with Gaelic in written form and, thus, I felt a compelling need to quickly capture the order of the letters and the hats of the accents before they disappeared from the white board never to be seen again.

Having progressed through the whole song, repeating each line after Sinead, it was now time to introduce a tune. Immediately, the air became filled with a nervous apprehension; we hadn't signed up for singing. However, with Sinead's lead we tentatively and quietly began to sing the words to Teidí Beag Buí.

Teidí beag álainn, teidí beag buí,
Thit sé sa pháirc agus tá sé an-tinn.
Tá sé ina leaba bheag, tá sé ina luí,
Teidí beag álainn, teidí beag buí.

Ghortaigh sé a cheann agus ghortaigh sé a shúil,
Ghortaigh sé a ***"I've lost it!"***

Hands went flying up through the air as an exacerbated body next to me slumped in an air of silence.
Research Journal, March 3rd 2017

Unionist politicians often speak *for* Gaelic. The Irish language is spoken of as a dead language. Paradoxically, it is labelled as a nonsensical, useless language with a 'dark side' that threatens the 'Britishness' of Northern Ireland (Moriarty 2018). In an article for the Irish Examiner, Richard Irvine (2018: n.p.) a Belfast-born teacher and lecturer in English and History, recalls his childhood perception of Gaelic: 'we Protestants fear Gaelic and we were raised to mock it'. Irvine (2018) exemplifies this mockery remembering when bilingual signs appeared in the Student's Union at Queens University, Belfast in the 1980s: 'in anger, confusion, and insecurity, we mocked and derided the unpronounceable signs upon the union's wall.' From a Protestant orientation the Irish language is approached through an attitude of mockery that seeks its derision by reducing Gaelic to a passive silence.

Silence has traditionally been equated with violence. Hannah Arendt (1994: 308), for example, argues that 'violence begins where speech ends.' Here, silence is equated with dominance and appropriation. Arendt claims silence denies the other a space and voice of their own appearance. Recently, an incident of mockery and insult occurred in the Northern Ireland Assembly. Nationalist MLAs open their address to the chamber with the Gaelic sentence "*go raibh maith agat Ceann Comhairle*", which translates to "thank you Speaker" and is pronounced as "gurra moy ugut conn core l-ya." The DUP MP Gregory Campbell appropriated this Gaelic phrase when, in 2014, he opened his address to the Assembly with "*curry my yogurt can coca coalyer*" (Clark 2014). In the 'spirit of mockery', Campbell transgressed the threshold in-between the self and the other and lead the other to a suite in a pre-coded house of language (Irigaray 2002b), wherein Gaelic is a priori determined to be a language of gibberish, expressed by appropriating the Gaelic sounds to the nonsensical phrase "*curry my yogurt*". Campbell's mockery and appropriation of Gaelic was a violent act of noise; an act of denying the Irish language its own voicing by reducing the sounds and shapes of Gaelic to a passive silence. Arendt's argument, then, does not coalesce around silence per se but the inability of a body to have a voice, to continue in speech, due to the ceaseless and violent noise from an other body; a noise that annuls limits. This is not the silence that the body, in the middle of the children's song *Teidí beag álainn*, was moved to.

Irigaray's philosophical work offers an alternative conceptualisation of silence. Opposed to immediately relegating silence to the outcome of a violent dominance, Irigaray thinks silence in dialogue with the wonder of difference and embodied, relational limits or threshold.[70] Silence is not what has yet to come to language, what is lacking in words and voice, or an ineffability undeserving of a presence in speech (Still 2012). Rather, Irigaray (2008a: 5) conceives of silence as the active 'speaking of the threshold,' wherein speech is held 'in abeyance' (Querrien 2006 in Manning 2011: 91) in the open, undermined, free movement of breath. Breath is both active and actively passive. To take a breath is to give pause, suspension, latency; it is to be in silence. The suspension and pause animated in breath prevent capturing bodies and words in complete and total visibility. Life is always-already in relation to absence (Kohn 2013), to what it is not becoming, to the wondrous surprise maintained in silence.

Slumped in an air of silence, the body next to me could not find the Gaelic sounds. These sounds were unlocatable in his body, in the movement of his breath, his tongue, his mouth. They are unfamiliar, unknown sounds, and despite staring down at him from the whiteboard, the sounds could not be found with his eyes. Faced with the mystery, surprise, and wonder of the unknown, the body was moved to silence; an actively-passive position sustaining the continual movement of the lively passion of not knowing. The body that slumped in an air of silence came 'to a standstill in front of the irreducibility of the other' (Irigaray 2002b: 36). He did not speak-for the other through appropriating Gaelic to an English eye or ear but was moved to silence in relation to the irreducibility, the unknown wonder, of the other. Silence attunes the body to:

> …a breath that has not yet been determined or expressed in a certain way, according to certain rules, a certain logic, and thus can be respected and shared as life itself beyond its various embodiments and forms of expression (Irigaray 2013b: 221).

Silence, like breath, is active prior to form, before the body is given a determined shape and territorial rooting. To encounter the other in a closeness moving the body to a slumped silence, is to manifest a stepping back that creates a spacing in-between the self and the other (Irigaray 2002a): 'I stop before you as before something insurmountable, a mystery, a freedom that will never be mine' (Irigaray 2004a: 8). The body is not met as a known being but is encountered in an air of wonder and enchantment that, in the presence of silence, becomes layered with respect, gratitude, and a value for difference. Silence gifts a space-time to what lies beyond the self's limits, across the threshold, to the other whom the self cannot speak and can never know, to the one who is always-already unfamiliar to me (Oliver 2007). This is a space of letting-be, in which the other is not drained of breath (de Vries 2008) but continues to voice their own appearance in the wondrous and mysterious sounds and shapes of Gaelic, which are not halted in mockery but gifted a space-time wherein they continue to fill the air.

[70] Mirroring their use in the breadth of Irigaray's thinking, I mobilise limits and threshold – and the negative, which is another word Irigaray advances – will little distinction and as always-already relational.

The body moved to silence in the middle of the song had only been attending the beginner's class for a few weeks. He was moved to an unexpected, halting silence in the middle of a sentence. As the body becomes more familiar with the space of Turas and encounters the Irish language in this space on a sustained basis, the awareness and need for silence becomes more acute. Sarah, who attends the intermediate class at Turas, described this need for silence: "*you kind of have to let it [the Irish language] wash through your head a wee while*". Sarah, here, voices a need to almost actively sit back, to pause, and to be in silence as unfamiliar Gaelic sounds are encountered. This is not to move the body to passivity[71] but an active silence responding to the call of the encounter. The slumped body moved to silence by the unknowable Gaelic sounds did not become passive, but quickly sat up, cocked the ear, and attuned to the emerging experience of being in relation. To sit back in silence and let the Gaelic sounds wash over the listening body, is not to engage in a closed circuit of communication but, as Manning (2007: 11) illustrates, is the making of reciprocal communication that is 'not necessarily felt or acknowledged through words, but through a returning of' touch. Touching demands a duet; it demands an attunement to a feeling-with moving across experience and towards emerging, eventful encounters in the present. The touch of silence, then, is a relation (Kottman 2005) or, in Irigaray's (2000a) words, a dialogue of touch – a call and response attentive to relational limits woven in-between.

Silence marks the presence, the touch, of relational limits in-between the self and the other. Limits, on the hand, mark the embodied – if moving – boundary of the self that 'I cannot overcome; but, on the other hand, it acts as an announcement of the other – he or she with whom I may enter into relation' (E. R. Jones 2015: 24). Silence animates an embodied attunement-to and respect-for the other whom I cannot know. Irigaray (2002a: 123-125, original emphasis) writes:

> It is when we do not know the other, or when we accept that the other remains unknowable to us, the other illuminates us is someway but with a light that enlightens us without our being able to comprehend it, to analyse it, to make it ours. The totality of the other…touches us beyond all knowledge, all judgment, all reduction to ourselves…insofar as the other escapes all judgment on our part that he or she emerges as *you*, always other and nonappropriable by *I*… [P]erceiving and respecting the irreducibility of the other…this opening of a world of one's own, experienced as familiar, in order to welcome the stranger, while remaining oneself and letting the stranger be other.

To encounter the other as other is for one's own body to be enlightened. Life is always-always already 'in relation to absence, to silence' (Kohn 2013: 212). Silence does not simply presuppose a space beyond one's own body, but it also respects the space and limits of the self in a movement of return or withdrawal. Slumped in an active silence, the only sound, the only movement, which arose from the body was the continued inhale and exhale of breath – an inhalation and exhalation that returns the body to itself, to its own space, and its own limits. Silence attunes the body both to the unknowable other but *also* 'to the

[71] A silence occurring without relation is a passive silence. Passive silence is the reduction of one's body and one's life to external, dominating forces. It is a return to sameness and to the violence of speaking-for. This externally enforced and total passive silence that Arendt names as violence. The silence I am tracing, however, is relational because it moves with and respects the presence of limits and threshold active in-between.

movements of our inner breath, to the pulsation (inspiration and expiration) of life in ourselves' (Škof 2018: 60).

Learning a language starts with silence. In this silence the body is connected to the movement of their own breath: they draw towards the limits of the other in the movement of the exhale, only to immediately withdraw to the self in the inhalation. The learning of a language moves within this oscillation of exhalation and inhalation.

Drochdhóigh.
Silence.
Drochdhóigh…arís.
Drochdhóigh…arís.
Drochdhóigh…arís.
Silence.

An impossible sound.
droCHGHoy.
A different movement of breath.

CH: a sound located as the front of the mouth, animated in a movement whereby breath pushes first through the teeth and, then, through pursed lips before it escapes into the air.
CH CH CH CH CH CH CH
GH: a sound created when breath moves at the back of the mouth. Breath starts at the back of the tongue and, from here, is propelled further back until it touches it upon the wall at the back of the mouth (the posterior wall of the pharynx), before then moving along the soft palate and entering into the air as a deep, breathy sound.
GH GH GH GH GH GH GH
CHGH CHGH CHGH CHGH CHGH CHGH CHGH CHGH
A movement of breath though the teeth and pursed lips in a direct, linear inhalation, only to be immediately pulled back to the rear of the mouth. Here, it does an almost a complete rotation caressing the back of the tongue, before moving to the back of the mouth and, finally, gently gliding over the softness of the roof of the mouth.
Then release.

Drochdhóigh.
An attentiveness to the movement of breath. A new breath moving differently. A new sound.

Research journal, January 17th 2017

An active and embodied encounter with the Irish language animates moments whereby dwelling literally becomes rooted in the aerial practice of breathing. Here the body breathes consciously and moves in, and with, the vitality of its own living in the present; a living beyond or, more precisely prior to, the

imposition of, and alignment to, the stasis of external identity constructions. The body, at least in this moment of conscious breath, is not compelled to dwell in a pre-determined and inherited Protestant orientation that is firmly rooted in definitional spaces: it does not mock or appropriate the sounds and shapes of Gaelic. Rather, it moves with the sounds and shapes of its own breath, prior to any imposition of meaning or the recognition of form – Irish or British – but always in relation to the unknown other whose sounds and shapes it is listening-to. The body is returned, through the silence, stillness, and withdrawal of inhalation, to the original potential of the first birth: to the continually blossoming of the to-be or, what Manning (2013: 208) calls, 'body-tendings'.

The blossoming of the to-be moves not with bodies per se but with body-tendings. Manning (2013: 208) conceives of body-tendings as 'rhythmic activations of a body-morphing that never precedes the event of their coming into relation.' Body-morphing is an autonomous act animated in a relational event. In the oscillation between autonomy and relationality, engaged through the activity of breathing, the body blossoms in its own movement in relation to the worlds and bodies around it and, at the same time, cultivates a silence which is almost a closure or withdrawal allowing it to maintain its own movement of becoming, its self-same to-be that is blossoming in relation to what it cannot know (Kohn 2013). Autonomy necessitates relationality to be sustained as an autonomous movement, whilst relationality requires autonomy to prevent a collapse into dualistic dependency.

To attune to the sounds and shapes of Gaelic is not to become like the other. The sounds and shapes emerging in one's own breath are not known, but neither are they copied. They are sounds and shapes moving differently within each different body, with every different movement of becoming, with every different relation: a *re*-duplication moving with the incipient and dynamic iteration of sound (Kohn 2013). In the Turas classrooms, the encountered words, phrases, and sentences were often scribbled down on sheets and in notebooks lying on the table in front of bodies. These words moved with the breath of that body, and often the letters and sounds drawn together to form the Gaelic differed from body to body, from notebook to notebook and, whilst maintaining a consistent shape, they moved and shifted with each emerging relation. Between these bodies and written sounds relational limits and silences are maintained, even as a closeness and intimacy are cultivated.

Breath animates a folding in the middle where the in-between is created as the essential opposition between the internal and the external dissolves and the self and other are put into an intersubjective, relational weaving. What emerges in the blossoming of the to-be is beyond the human, object, or territory. What emerges is relation. This relation precedes the body it animates; a relation of incipient possibility, an incipient relation of autonomous blossoming in-between (Manning 2013). Irigaray (2017: 102) herself articulates how 'it is in the interlacing of our bodies talking to one another that the transcendental matter, from which our 'to be' takes shape, lies.' The in-between is the becoming of difference but in proximity opposed to separation and division. An encounter moving with the silence of

breath cannot be reduced to sameness but nor can it be thought as separation. Encountering the other in a relational silence of breath animates the potential for sharing.

6.4 Sharing In-between the Breath of Mistranslation

It's the final session of the díanchúrsa Gaelige and the four classes – bunrang a hAon, bunrang a dó, meánrang, ardráng – are in full swing. In the bunrang a dó class we are moving through the different tenses of Irish in relation to the laethanta na seachtaine. For some of us this is new vocabulary and faced with looks of confusion and loss, Seamus slows the pace to spend some time going through the unfamiliar words. As Seamus voices each day in turn, my whole-body focusses on listening and following the different sounds before we together attempt to repeat what we had heard: arís, arís, arís. Dé Luan. Dé Mháirt. Dé Luan. Dé Mháirt. Dé Luan. Dé Mháirt. Feeling the sounds moving around the mouth: breath escaping in the sound of 'jay', the pursed lips of the 'loo', and the pulling back of the mouth to create the 'un'. Dé Chéadaoin. Dé Déardaoin. Dé Chéadaoin. Dé Déardaoin. Dé Chéadaoin. Dé Déardaoin. Sensing which sounds hold a silent presence and what sounds move together to a different tone. Jay EEN yuh. Jay SAH-(t)hurn. Jay DO(m)H-nukh. Jay EEN yuh. Jay SAH-(t)hurn. Jay DO(m)H-nukh. Jay EEN yuh. Jay SAH-(t)hurn. Jay DO(m)H-nukh.

As we move with the different shapes of these unfamiliar words, my body faults in a state of surprise. It slowly attunes to an other sound; to sounds that have never before touched upon Gaelic tones. The feint rhythmic beat of a drum. Flutes breathing a dancing melody. The disciplined echo of heavily clad feet moving in time. DUM. DUM. D-D-D-D-D-DUM. Tootle–too–too–too–tootle-toooooo—to-to-to—toooo–to–to–tootle-tooo. One…two…one…two…one…two…one…two. Sitting still in a room in the Skainos centre, I move to a different world, and to a novel space that has not previously been listened-to. The two sounds play together; they swirl, intermingle, dance. The air fills. It expands, amplifies, and respires with the growing sounds of the two. Jay EEN yuh. DUM. –(t)hurn. Dé Chéadaoin. too–tootle-toooooo—to-to-to. DUM. One…loo-un. D-D-DUM. two…one…two…one…two. Jay DO(m)H-nukh. Then as quickly as the moment of crescendo, I sense a retreat as the sounds of the drums, flutes, and marching pulls back to the Newtownards Road. The Gaelic sounds continue to vibrate in the air – Jay LOO-in, Jay march, Jay KAY-deen, JAY-ar-deen, Jay HEEN-yeh, Jay SA-ha-rin, Jay DOH-nee – yet they now feel slightly different.

Research journal, September 9th 2017

Moving with breath, the external sounds of the marching band fold inside to reach-towards the internal Gaelic enclave in the middle of east Belfast where the sounds of the Irish language, traditionally quietened and contained within the protective walls of the building, rise up to meet the melody of the flutes, the thunder of the bass drum, and the swagger of the marching beat. Within this aerial folding, the inside and the outside are put into incipient relations in-between. The in-between is a space of breath, a shared elemental movement wherein the 'two tones can interpenetrate; they can be "in" each other, while remaining perpetually distinct' (Begbie 2017: 18). The sounds were not in competition, but they

did not merely tolerate one and other nor simply make space for each other. They vibrated, pulsated, swirled, and danced together; a folding and entwining of matter and form in relations of attraction, tension, movement, and action outside the order of number and beyond accomplishment (Hill 2012). Together they blossomed. Free and enhanced in a shared movement that uncompromised the autonomy of either (Begbie 2017). They were moving in relation. Together breathing a shared vitality of giving and receiving, of approach and withdrawal. They moved with the relational event of autonomous blossoming.

The shared space of the in-between is ungraspable in shape and form. It is neither completely material nor wholly incorporeal. Relations in-between the self and the other move with the event in the presence of its emergence to weave a groundless ground, which Irigaray (2002b: 72) conceives as 'an act of grounding which does not end in any ground.' This is not a rooting to territory or predetermined, habitual performances of recognition but the weaving of a shared aerial synergy, which can never be partitioned or isolated as breath is gifted and received without demonstration, and before distinction between giver and receiver (Irigaray 1999a). The two touch upon one and other in this shared spacing as the air fills and expands in the constellation of sounds active in-between.

To share in breath with the other is to redraw borders. Breathing animates a true sharing in-between the inside and the outside, which is not simply the blurring of borders but the making of an alternative movement in which division and separation no longer play the crucial role (R. Jones 2015). Throughout conversations there was an acknowledgement of the breaking down of borders and an intimate and embodied intertwining in-between. Áine explained the breaking down of division and separation in the space of Turas.

> *I mean I'm sure there are other projects out there doing huge...I'm not saying this is the be all and end all, but I just think that sort of links, that sort of creating an openness to consider the island of Ireland as something that you're actually part of, no matter what your identity is, you know. Sort of breaking down that kind of what may have been for some people a very, very rigid demarcation of what their geographic space was and their religious space and their cultural space and just opening up all that and making them, facilitating them to share with other people, people that they felt they didn't have anything to share.*

Áine here illustrates how participating in the space of Turas, which is undoubtedly a space made from an alternative movement to division and separation, breaks down rigid geographical demarcations of territorialisation and animates an openness for sharing in-between.

Many of the people I spoke with from Turas discussed how learning Gaelic has cultivated an openness to a sense of Irishness. Whilst this openness undoubtedly changes worlds, bodies do not suddenly become Irish. Sharing is not the blurring of identarian boundaries and borders and their territorial manifestation, but a movement of breath allowing for the blossoming of the to-be within and across 'a relational in-between in which both participate but which does not belong simply to either' (R. Jones 2015: 170, see

also Irigaray 2008b). David, a relatively new learner at the time of our conversation, acutely exemplified the groundless ground of participation through appealing to the metaphor of a Venn diagram.

David: *Umm, I'm not sure that I think that it's going to, err, that there will be a link…I will see them as, as, as two overlapping circles, if you like, but not, not ever merging… Umm, well I don't think you do, I think, I think you, you associate the Irish language with, err, the history of Ireland, err, I, I don't have any problem in having the two running alongside each other. But I don't think it is ever going to, as I said earlier, I don't think there's ever going to be a coming together of the two circles. There will be an overlap.*

Ciara: *Them running, running alongside, overlapping, it doesn't take away from one or the other?*

David: *No, not at all, not at all, no. It's, it's, it's like a Venn diagram it sort of overlaps. But it will never, it will never merge.*

Here, David voices how an encounter with the Irish language creates a third world, the very spacing of the interval, born from the exchange of flesh and breath in-between. As David expresses, the making of third worlds are not a merging or blurring of border. Third worlds are not the production of sameness. Rather, they are spaces of sharing folding in-between.

Sharing does not require forgoing the specificity of one's own world and one's own breath. Linda voices how Turas does not ask bodies "*to compromise who they are*." Turas is a space of sharing but a sharing of worlds emerging in the very proximity of difference. I cannot meet, or share with, the other in my world for this would amount to projecting myself onto the other, an appropriation resulting in the loss of both the familiarity of my world and the other's familiarity to their world. Thus, what is needed, what is created in the encounter respectful of relational limits, is a third world in-between the self and the other in which both participate while remaining autonomous in their own bodies and worlds (Irigaray 2008a). Third worldings cultivate a distance of autonomy in the proximity of relationality in-between the two (Alfonso 2011) or, as Rachel Jones (2015: 162) writes, 'a space-time shared inseparably between one and another even as it is the condition of the relations that differentiate them.' Encounters composed from a sharing of breath are the making of moments moving in-between and across shifting borders which, as Hannah illustrates, undoes the dominance of borders and boundaries.

I mean I would be very much Northern Irish you know, because I've a UK passport, I don't have an Irish one but I have an American one, but if I didn't have an American one then I would have an Irish one, you know I would be both. So, you know I am more Irish than…I don't know, the whole political thing, I just try to ignore it because it is too complicated to make a call, and more to the point it doesn't even matter.

Making this call is no longer what is important; 'borders and separation no longer play the constitutive role' (R. Jones 2015: 170). Having actively felt and participated in the making of moments in-between, desire resides in continuing to move with the openness of these in-between worldings; what becomes important is the experience, the sensations, and intimacy of sharing in itself. A sharing of (mis-)translations folding in-between.

6.4.1 The miscoordination of a messy translation in-between

"No, you can't say you love your dog, it just doesn't make sense. "Is grá liom thu" is how we voice our love specifically for people."

Act One

Setting the scene: A group of learners are sitting in the larger of Turas' two classrooms. It is the first class back after the two-week Easter break. When the class arrived earlier in the evening, they we were not met by the friendly, comforting calls of Sinead's voice, but by a new, unfamiliar body. This new body stands solitary at the front of the classroom, before placing a chair centre stage in the middle of the horseshoe arrangement of desks and tables. He waits for complete silence before he begins to speak.

***

Act Two

Setting the scene: The initial coldness from the beginning of the class has dissipated and bodies have relaxed. It is ten minutes before the end of the class and Liam is moving around the desk asking if there were any queries regarding the new vocabulary.

A heated discussion begins to grow stage right, the other bodies sat around the desk begin to look up and become engrossed in the altercation – the tension from the beginning of the class suddenly returns.

Boy: But why?
Liam: It just doesn't make sense.
Boy: Why doesn't it make sense?
Liam: Because is "is grá liom thu" is how we express our love specifically for people, it cannot be used for inanimate objects or for your dog, your cat, or your cow. Nor for a plant, tree, or flower.
Boy: But I can say "is grá liom madraí", I love dogs, there I have said it.
Liam: It can of course be said, but it doesn't make sense.

(Sensing the altercation had drawn in other eyes and ears, Liam moves back to a central position and addresses the whole room).

Liam: You all know that well known phrase 'don't try to teach your Grandmother to suck eggs', well this phrase doesn't exist in Irish. A direct translation can be made but it doesn't make sense. And it works both ways. Take the Gaelic saying 'an tuan ag múineadh meálai da mhathair.' This phrase cannot be directly translatable into Béarla, I suppose a mistranslation would be 'the lamb teaches its mother how to bleat.'

(All other bodies stare at Liam silently, with perplexed expression as they process what they've heard).

Liam: Now your perspective has been opened.

Based on research journal, April 25th 2017

Irish and English are two different languages. The sentence construction of the Irish language, the different sounds, and the creation of 'meaning' are not directly translatable to the English language; between the two does not exits a predetermined perfection wherein the two languages and their worlds are captured within a unified, singular system of knowledge, understanding, and practice. As an act folding in-between Gaelic and the English, translation is a messy process of 'jarring juxtaposition and miscommunication' (Tsing 2015: 217). Miscommunication is not known in advance but felt and sensed in the event of the present: in the rising of tension of the classroom; in the raised tones voicing the altercation between Liam and the boy; and in the boy's persistent and confused questioning of why.

The act of translation in-between changes worlds and bodies (Tsing 2015). In another class, Sinead told us about the Irish language Terminology Committee in Dublin – comprised of academics, writers, and terminologist – tasked with creating new official Irish words. Through the messy process of miscoordination, around 3,000 new Irish words are created each year. A recent word translated into Irish is 'spooning', which has been translated to '*spúnáil*'. Whilst this is clearly a Gaelicisation of the English term, the board also produced a more descriptive version '*luigh tóin le gabhal*' which literally translates as 'bum to crotch'. Here, we can acutely see the messy, miscoordination between the two languages and the desire to preserve this jarring messiness by refusing a simple Gaelicisation of the English word.[72] Another recently translated word is Brexit, which created some controversy among the committee with some member stating they would be inclined to use the English words as it is. Yet, common translations of Brexit include Sasamach, which is a joining together of 'Sasana' + 'amach' meaning 'England' + 'out', and Bréalú which is an amalgamation of 'Breatain' + 'éalú' meaning 'Britain' + 'escape' (Ní Aodha 2018). Here, it is clear to see the miscoordination between *Gaelige* and the *Béarla* and how the two languages mobilise slightly different understandings, meanings, and perspectives.

Back at Turas, Sinead spoke of how her friendship group would create their own translations. She told us how her friends would be sitting around socialising and in the middle of a conversation they would be forced to revert to *Bearla* as there was no Irish for the word needed. When this happened, the present bodies would together create a term that would then become common within their friendship group. Sinead used the example of Memory Stick, saying among her friends they refer to it as a '*cluiche meaitseála leictreach*', which can loosely be translated to 'electric matchstick'. She stated an official Gaelic name for a Memory Stick has now been produced, but that among her friends they continue to use the words they created in their intimate and creative moment of translation that 'is neither proper to each nor common to the two' (Irigaray 2004a: xiii).

The act of translation is a continuous and novel making. Liam noted this creation when, after giving voice to the miscoordination in-between Gaelic and English, he voiced: "*now your perspective has been opened.*"

[72] This is to move against the anglicisation of Irish place names that took place as part of Britain's colonisation of the island of Ireland.

This is a 'perception of depth' (Kohn 2013: 98), which does not reside with the self or the other but folds in-between to create something that is shared. Relations of miscoordination animate a common in-between. Yet, as soon as the common becomes common, when it becomes custom, we lose the miscoordination of the common. The common, then, is not the production of a defined community through external relations of consensus, but the making of a c*ommoning* that never becomes common as it continues to respire with the living vitality of the to-be.

Sharing is dependent upon staying with the tension between autonomy and relationality, opposed to negating messiness in an act of perfected unity that fall into either extreme (Kohn 2013), which can only ever result in a return to sameness. We needed to stop searching for the perfect translation from Irish to English to Irish, and resist questioning why this translation is not possible. Instead, we need to become comfortable within the messy and jarring space of the in-between, and respectful of the relational limits this brings to light. It is in the disorientating comfort of miscoordination that a different looking-with and listening-to is created. As Irigaray (2004c: 399) writes:

> And if we see differently when we look together, as two, at the same landscape, it is not because a visible has been added; it is because we look differently when we share looking at...my gaze, whether I want it to or not, whether I perceive it or not, sees differently if I am not alone looking in the present. My perception itself is modified because it is shared with the other. This cannot be explained by the sharing of a doubling or by a mutual consenting to resemblance, but because flesh [and breath] circulates between the world and me, between the other and myself.

An encounter composed from breath folding in-between the inside and the outside, animates a shared space-time in which the self and other look and listen together and, in doing so, cultivate change and transformation. Bill gives voice to the transformation of listening together.

Bill has been attending Turas for several years. He first began to learn Irish in Donegal, which was his first post as a Presbyterian minister. The classes he attended in Donegal were run by a local priest, but on returning to Belfast and having a much larger congregation, Bill speaks of how his Irish "*kind of withered away*." Bill is currently Deputy Clerk of the Presbyterian Church in Ireland General Assembly and, thus, now he keeps regular office hours that allow him to attend Irish language classes as Turas where, at the time of our conversation, he was working towards an Irish language GCSE. Bill alluded to the difference of looking and listening together when we spoke.

> *Well it's just, you know, the different idioms that languages have, umm, I mean you've got this bit in Irish where you don't say I have something, you say it's at me. And your hair is on you, and that, those prepositions and the way they work if you, you know, a different perspective on even how to think of how you use your English, you know, and why does English express it that way and another language expresses it a different way... Umm, so you know, that, that, I think it enables you to, to understand your life maybe, maybe that's too grand, but because the different languages express the same thing but in totally different ways there's more than one way of looking at things. You know, but that's, I think it broadens your horizons that way.*

Bill illustrates how in moving in-between the body touches upon the awareness that there is not a singular, consenting perception or a perfect translation speaking for both the Irish and English language. Bill indicates to share in moments of miscoordination animates a change that *"broadens your horizons"*. Worlds are not in isolation. Their specificity cannot be the result of a prior logic of separation nor of an externally imposed rational consensus or likeness, but 'an effect of the [mis-]convergence' in the folding of breath in-between (Tsing 2015: 218). Consensus cannot be imposed in a messy process of miscoordination. Translation, rather, is 'a kind of mixed-up' act that does not simply maintain difference but moves 'hand and hand with the eruption of difference' (Tsing 2015: 217), wherein consensus becomes dissensus – the 'realisation that I am not yet' (Manning 2007: 14). What is shared in-between worlds and bodies in-between, what is in-common, is the making of incipient possibility.

6.4.2 An Irish enclave

Turas is undoubtedly a space of sharing transforming borders, boundaries, and limits as new peaceful worlds and shared futures are woven in-between. However, these moments and the shared worlds they animate are by no means ubiquitous or constant; they remain fleetingly speculative. Bodies engaging in spaces of shared encounter return to acutely territorialised, segregated, and divided worlds. Consciously aware or not, this is never the same body returning to the same world. Yet, embodied micro-political movements of transformation are accompanied by the erection of novel borders and boundaries, as the body falls prey to the pervasive dualism of Northern Ireland's territorialised stasis.

Entering the Skainos Building, up the three flights of stairs, and onto the corridor where the Turas office and classrooms are located, is to move across a threshold and enter into a different world. The threshold between the space of Turas and the space of east Belfast marks a dividing border enclosing the internal in one space and the external in a different space. Joan acutely brought my attention to the borders surrounding Turas.[73] Joan is a small, middle-aged woman approaching retirement, who attended the same Tuesday night beginner's language class I attended. She comes across as a very committed and dedicated learner, who has a quiet but undeniable passion for the Irish language. Joan's father was born in South Wales and was a fluent Welsh speaker but, living in Northern Ireland, his children were not taught Welsh. Joan spoke of how her inability to speak and communicate in Welsh divorced her from her Welsh heritage – from her Welsh family, from Welsh culture and tradition, and from the very ground and soil of Wales. Joan explained how this feeling of separation and disconnection extended to Northern Ireland and the broader island of Ireland, due to her inability to speak Irish. Her desire for an embodied and active connection to her everyday space prompted a movement towards Turas. Joan lives in east Belfast and, thus, attending Turas does not require crossing any geographical borders. Yet, speaking about the space of Turas, Joan likened Turas to the Vatican City, describing it as a separate and

[73] The conversation Joan and I had was the only interview I conducted that, at Joan's request, was not recorded. I took notes during the interview, but these notes were not verbatim and, thus, whilst grounded in what Joan said, the conversation here is retold through my words.

bounded Irish space in the heart of Loyalist, British east Belfast that many local people not only avoid, but look upon with suspicion and even anger.

As an organisation, Turas extends far beyond the Skainos centre. Turas is a non-profit organisation and, in order to secure continued funding, the classes offered are promoted widely throughout Belfast and there is constant attempt to establish broad connections and networks across Northern Ireland and further afield. Linda often partakes in topical radio talk shows and has given several interviews across a variety of formats. Invites to Unionist politicians, especially those cautious of the Irish language, are always extended. Turas has also appeared on televised news features, usually addressing the stalemate in Stormont, aired in Northern Ireland, the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain, and has been the subject of numerous newspaper articles both north and south of the border. Linda and Gareth engage in outreach work across Belfast and further afield, running heritage sessions exploring the historic links between Protestants and the Irish language, as well as discussions and workshop around the relevance of Gaelic to modern Northern Irish society. Turas has established close relationships with other Gaelic-based organisations and Irish language schools in Belfast, and with the Gaeltacht in Donegal and Kerry.

At the beginning of every academic year, a group of volunteers pound the streets of east Belfast, including the Catholic territory of Short Strand, with leaflets advertising the classes available at Turas. Although the majority of Turas learners are from the wider area of east Belfast or other areas marked as belonging to the Protestant, Unionist, and Loyalist community, very few of the learners are from the immediate locale. I asked Linda about the difficulty in engaging with the immediate locale.

Ciara: *Do you think, is there many very local people who do attend?*

Linda: *Well they were all very local at first, but umm, not as much now.*

Ciara: *And Short Strand obviously has always been a hard place for you to kind of tap into, even though Patrick has tried for a number of years.*

Linda: *Yeah. Still most of them still come from east Belfast when we look at their addresses,*[74] *umm, but it's kinda Greater East Belfast now, you know, where at first they were all really local.*

With little engagement from the immediate surrounding and, despite best efforts, Turas feels like a bordered enclave separate from the rest of east Belfast, *"a little bit of Irishness in the middle of all this…east Belfast tradition" (Josie)*. Turas is notably separated from the character, the spirit, the people,

[74] As a requirement of funding, Turas must disclose to funders the number of learners coming from a Protestant background and the number of learners coming from a Catholic background. However, Turas does not directly ask learners to specify their territorial identity but they do, on new learners' forms that are re-submitted at the beginning of every academic year, ask for addresses alongside a series of other information. Whilst I was volunteering at Turas, I was asked to go through these forms for the latest academic year, compile a database of the Turas learners and, based on their address, mark each learner as Catholic or Protestant. Clearly this is not the most accurate way of getting this data and neither does it give learners an option to opt out of Catholic or Protestant categorisation. It reinforces the assumption that every body *is* Catholic or Protestant and that this recognition resides statically in territorial rooting. Yet, this detail is never voiced in classes and it is used once a year for producing statistics and, so, I maintain encounters within the space of Turas are not framed by the Catholic or Protestant narrative, even if the space cannot wholly escape processes of bodily categorisation and naming.

and the atmosphere of the territory in which it is located. This separation and division are also replicated in the silence people adopt when they return to their inherited worlds.

Turas is a space of sustained encounter yet the moments of sharing active within this space are perhaps only fleeting and speculative in terms of their wider potential. In the telling of her story, Joan voiced a secrecy around her engagement with Turas and the Irish language more broadly. She described how she 'whispers' about learning Irish and only into the ears she knows to be sympathetic. Turas may be a space shared in-between but this sharing does not always extend externally to other spaces and worlds. Joan situated the capacity to be open about learning Irish in the current political context, expressing how her whispers have become increasingly hushed with the current political contention.

On the 20th May 2017, An Dream Dearg organised a march and rally in Belfast in support of the Irish Language Act (see figure 23). Turas took part in the March and Joan went along with Turas to show her support for the Act. During the march Joan turned around to survey the scene behind her. She spoke in awe and disbelief as her gaze was met with Sinn Féin, including Gerry Adams, who happened to be marching directly behind Turas. Joan exclaimed this was the closest she had ever been to a 'Shinner'. The An Dream Dearg march moved along the Falls Road in west Belfast, before a rally was held in front of Belfast City Hall. Moving into west Belfast and marching next to Sinn Féin was a novel experience for Joan and illustrates how attending Turas animates a movement in which borders, boundaries, and division no longer play a fundamental role (R. Jones 2015). Yet, as Joan brought the story to a close, almost as an afterthought but tainted with a notable sadness, she said her husband still does not know she took part in the march.

The quietness and secrecy surrounding Turas, and the intimate borders and separations these constructs, was a recurring theme throughout conversations. Karl spoke how he "*didn't even tell his parents he was going to do it [learn Irish].*" Just as Joan said she would only tell people who she knew would be sympathetic, when I asked Josie whether she told many people about her engagement with Gaelic she replied:

> *I probably don't…I'm probably careful who I would tell which is ridiculous. Umm I know one person who I use to work with in the hospital and umm and…you know he would say "what do you want to learn that for?" you know, yet he's the one who is very interested in townlands*[75]*…so therefore, excuse me, you said you are not interested in the Irish language but you're very interested in townlands but where do you think they all came from, you know they came from the Irish, I suppose so and then end of conversation.*

[75] Townlands are 'the smallest administrative unit of the land based on the traditional territorial division of the country into counties, baronies, parishes and townlands' (Nash 1999: 468). The townland system is a distinguishable mark of Ireland which distinguish it from the England, Wales and Scotland. The names of townlands being of Gaelic origin.

It is these negative responses that compel the hushed quietness surroundings a body's commitment and love of the Irish language, as exemplified by Rosie.

> *But I mean where I live, in the local shop where we get our newspaper, I mean it is only in the last…six, seven months that we could order an Irish News.*[76]*I wouldn't tell a lot in the shop, I wouldn't say I was*

Figure. 23. The An lá Dearg march poster (Caidre Turas 2017a: n.p.) and Turas taking part in the march on the 20th May 2017 (Caidre Turas 2017b: n.p.).

[76] The Irish News is a daily newspaper based in Belfast reporting all the latest from Northern Ireland and international news stories, including GAA sport, opinion, business, and family notices. Whilst it features Unionist columnists, it is broadly regarded to portray a Nationalist viewpoint explaining the difficulty in accessing the newspaper from Protestant territory.

going learning Irish, I'm still too frightened cause there are still too many who are of the mind-set that they're fenians,[77] *that's all you're going to get.*

Rosie, here, roots secrecy in the predetermined, territorial narrative surrounding the Irish language, and in the contextual expectations that regulate bodies and their coexistence (Valentine 2008), which mark an engagement with the Irish language as deviant. Gareth, who works for Turas and began learning the Irish language at the time of the Troubles, also feels this regulation.

And then the thing is can you speak Irish in the building, and you can speak it on the phone in the car park… I think people just think there's an Irish Language Centre somewhere in the attic, you know. And they talk Irish and that's it, but umm we don't really, do you know, umm, it's, it's not that we go into all the shops and tell everyone we're, I work for the Irish Language Centre.

Gareth alludes to the borders surrounding the space of Turas by suggesting Irish can only be spoken in the enclave of this space and not beyond it. Irish is acceptable or tolerated in the boundaries of Turas, but beyond these boundaries the territory is Protestant and this space, along with the bodies rooted within it, are orientated as distant from Irish culture. Gareth also refers to the position of Turas as an attic, which exemplifies the separation of Turas from the streets of east Belfast. Despite working for Turas, carrying out many outreach activities, and being a committed and passionate supporter of the Irish language, Gareth approaches this commitment with a hushed quietness stating he does not broadcast where he works.

The silences surrounding a body's engagement with Turas, are mirrored in an activity of self-policing. Laura, for example, discussed how she does not wear her Turas hoodie outside of her own home.

Do you know I have a Turas hoodie and I don't wear it like outside of my house? I mean I would wear it down here and I would wear it in town but I'm not sure...like I live, well I'm like a street away, I could probably get away with it but I'm conscious that I live in east Belfast.

The Loyalist and Protestant character of east Belfast prevents Laura from wearing her Turas hoodie in this area and compels her to submit to the territorial identity of the area, with the result her engagement with Turas is silenced. In a similar vein, Gareth spoke about immediately washing off green face paint on returning to east Belfast after the St Patricks Day Parade.

I remember one day we went to St Patricks Day Parade and we had green paint all over our faces. And then we came back and the first thing we all did was go to the toilets and take the green paint off. You know, because you're still, umm, Protestant.

Both Laura and Gareth illustrate whilst it is safe to engage with the Irish language in the enclave of Turas or even in the safety of the city centre, they do not feel comfortable to visibly portray this engagement in east Belfast because, as Gareth stated, "*you're still, umm, Protestant.*" Wearing a Turas hoodie or

[77] Fenian is a derogatory label used to designate someone from the Catholic community. The term comes from the Gaelic *féinne*, which is the singular form of *fiann* meaning 'band of warriors'. The Fenian Brotherhood was founded in American is 1858, as a sister organisation to the Irish Republican Brotherhood organised in Dublin and, together, they sought to remove the British presence from the island of Ireland (Kenny 2006). This Irish Republican Brotherhood are closely linked to the IRA and, thus, the movement referred to as the Fenians tends to encompass a series of Irish Republican organisations both in Ireland and America.

walking around with green face paint is not an available performance from a Protestant orientation. Thus, bodies engage in an activity of self-policing, whereby they filter out movements of messy translation, miscoordination, and dissensus across multiple worlds, as they realign to territorial orientations scripted from within the pervasive, binary identity constructions of Catholic or Protestant.

Speaking with husband and wife, Mark and Mary, the conversation of wearing Turas t-shirts and hoodies outside of the enclave of Turas was also was touched upon.

Mary: *We both just bought the t-shirt.*

Mark: *I am not going to wear it until I can speak more than six words mind you (laughing).*

Ciara: *It's funny and for me this was not something I had previously had to think about, but I was like can I wear this [the Turas t-shirt] going to the gym here and I had this dilemma, I could wear it going to the gym at home [Bristol] and it would be no issue at all and, also, I was slightly hesitant as to whether it would be something I would want to get into a conversation about. It was weird as I would wear it at home without any question, but I wasn't too sure here.*

Mary: *Yeah and I think I would feel the same.*

Mark: *Yep, I think I'll wear it whenever I can string more than the first opening sentences together.*

Mary: *But would you wear it in Carrickfergus?*[78]

Mark: *Yes, yes.*

Mary: *Would you.*

Mark: *Yes, because I am actually doing something that I feel…I want to be proud of and content with. I mean I was doing something the other day and I went "maith thu" out loud you know and they kind of looked at me. Then I phoned you from the airport the other day and I said "cad é mar atá tú?" on the phone and a guy sort of looked at me, what language is that you are speaking, "cad é mar atá tú?" you said "agus tú féin" I said "ta me g'moy" and that was the end of the conversation, that was about as far as we could get as that is about all we know. But actually, that was special.*

Similar to Laura, Mary and I both agreed we would have a slight hesitancy with regards to wearing the Turas t-shirt around Belfast due to the territorial nature of the city, and because of the current controversy surrounding Turas and the Irish language. Mark in contrast is adamant, even when pushed by Mary, he would wear the Turas t-shirt – even in Carrickfergus – once he "*can speak more than six words*." Mark

[78] Carrickfergus is a large town located on the Antrim coast, approximately eleven miles north of Belfast. In the 2011 census, 9.56% of the 39,144 (approx.) people living in Carrickfergus identified as belonging to or being brought up in the Catholic religion, whilst 79.27% identified as belonging to or as brought up in a Protestant and Other Christian (including Christian related) religion. Additionally, 76.55% indicated that they had a British national identity, 5.34% stated an Irish national identity, and 30.28% a Northern Irish identity (Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency 2012). At one time Carrickfergus had a larger Catholic population, but in 1999 the South East Antrim Ulster Defence Association (UDA) waged a campaign to remove the Catholic community and those in mixed (Catholic-Protestant) marriages from the area. This campaign resulted in violence and acts of intimidation towards the Catholic members of the town (The Irish Times 1999), with a consequence the Catholic population diminished as the British, Protestant, and Loyalist nature of the town was fortified.

spoke about how special it was when he rang Mary and the first words of their conversation were spoken *as Gaeilge*. Mark here did not police his action in accordance to his territory and he speaks of wanting[79] to be proud and content of his engagement with the Irish language irrespective of his background and territorial rooting. He does not want to filter out this internal and embodied contentedness but wants to move with it and with the moments of miscoordination that arise from moving across and in-between different worlds. Whilst this is not to say Mary, Gareth, Laura or myself are not proud or content with our engagement with Turas, it is to say that moments of translation and miscommunication will increase in prevalence when community and sharing is not approached from a consensus whole but from an incipient dissensus, moving with the miss-coordinating, jarring difference of living vitality.

An engagement in-between, at least in the case of Turas, constructs new borders and novel division between bodies. However, these borders are shifting and more fluid that the territorial borders fragmenting Northern Ireland. The Turas bubble is not rooted in territory. It is a bubble that has been filled with the generative relations of breath; an aerial ecology free to float through the air, wherein there is always the potential for transformative collisions and shared encounters. For example, many of the learners at Turas have: attended intensive Irish language summer courses at different Irish language schools and centres in various parts of Belfast; visited An Cultúrlann, an Irish language, arts and cultural centre, in the heart of West Belfast, on the Falls Road; travelled and spent time in the Donegal and Kerry Gaeltacht; marched in the St. Patrick's Day Parade or the An Dream Dearg; and attended Irish language events across Belfast. These movements extend the shared in-between space of Turas beyond its enclave, to displace a territorial way of being with an incipient aerial way of moving through space.

6.5 Conclusion: An ecological horizon

To move with breath is to realise peace-as-peace cannot arise within a horizon grounded in the stasis of territorial roots, mass orientations, and genealogical lineage; a horizon rooted in the activity of relational dependence. Nor will peace be created in a horizon of equality wherein worlds fall back into sameness, either via equivalence or equal separation. Peace in Northern Ireland, and perhaps beyond, needs to return to breath and become attentive to the emerging micro-political relationality that is always-already shaping, if only speculatively, the makings of peace-as-peace. In dialogue with Irigaray, this chapter has moved with wonder, silence, and sharing to detail what happens *in* an encounter mediated by breath.

Turas is a space firmly grounded in the violent and segregated legacy lived in post conflict Northern Ireland. Yet, Turas also exceeds and challenges the dualistic grammars of this legacy. It is not a space

[79] Mark states he wants to be proud and content of his engagement with the Irish language and with Turas. The word 'want' is interesting in this context: potentially Mark could have selected the word want because, at the time of the interview, he had only been attending Turas for a few weeks or it could potentially demonstrate he does not yet feel wholly comfortably with his movement towards Turas but wants to feel proud and content with his engagement.

of contact framed by predetermined acts of recognition wherein bodies are always-already labelled as Catholic or Protestant. Rather, Turas respires and inspires in breath, as bodies meet in a respiration folding in-between the external and the internal to share in the autonomous movement of becoming. This is not a movement of consensus or sameness but a movement of dissensus making worlds, bodies, and relations that in their emergence are unlocatable in the Catholic-Protestant horizon.

To encounter the other in breath is to create an alternative horizon. The inhalation of breath is a movement of withdrawal. Withdrawal animates a non-hierarchical verticality that is the blossoming and wonder of the body's own autonomy. Yet, this withdrawal is always-already an exhalation. It is always-already moving with a silence folding in-between. The in-between is a relational spacing moving horizontally to prevent hierarchy, dependency, and separation. To be transfixed in an intimate respect for the wonder of the other, is to be carried back to, and beyond, the movement of one's own becoming; horizontality is always-already moving with the vertical both in its prior and future movements (Irigaray 2017 seminar). Encountering the other in wonder, silence, and sharing – in the movement, materiality, and intimacy of breath – is the making of a future horizon in which verticality and horizontality fold and entangle in their emergence.[80] The creation of a novel, shared horizon, then, depends on respiring oscillations in-between the vertical and the horizontal, in-between proximity and difference, and in-between autonomy and relationality.

Turas respires with the in-between to open onto a shared future horizon. To encounter the other in the movement of breath folding in-between the internal and the external, is not to construct a predetermined world. How this sharing manifests and the worldings, bodies, and relations it animates cannot be known as they move with a new horizon residing in the groundless ground of the future. Yet, as Turas illustrates, the future of this horizon is immanent (Anderson 2006); it is a future that is living in the present (Kohn 2013). Although this immanent 'not yet' cannot displace the stasis of Northern Ireland, it is the disruption of 'what is' opening onto the hope of a different future moving beyond, or rather, before the imposition of dualistic form. What emerges in a shared encounter of breath is the making of speculative, dynamic and shared worldings that refuse categorisation.

Political action cannot aim for stability-as-stasis, for the maintenance of what is, wherein peace can only ever be the less-than-violent or non-violent. Yet, neither can it reside in designing what has never before been experienced. The making of peace respires with micropolitical actions choreographing an entangling in-between the vertical and the horizontal. This is the becoming of an ecological horizon wherein the blossoming of living vitality, of the wonder-full and wondering to-be of the body, *is* mutually constitutive. This is not a concern of identity and its politics, but an attentiveness to the dynamic relationality from which the making of shared, peaceful worlds may be actualised. Peace cannot be

[80] Irigaray (see 2000a: 18) refers to this folding in-between verticality and horizontality as 'horizontal transcendence', which she argues is necessary to maintain relational limits and wonder in-between and, so, the potential for the encounter.

engaged with as an endpoint to be achieved. Rather, peace is an embodied, relational project of making in a sharing of breath in-between.

The next chapter moves within the ecological horizon of breath. This horizon does not start with a conception of difference reduced to dualistic and hierarchical grammars of difference, wherein agonism and violence hold the original position. It is an aerial, ecological horizon, where difference is a shared movement of wonder, blossoming, and transformation; where differences 'become unremarkable, everyday and *breathable*' (Ye 2016: 81, my emphasis). To move within this immanent, if speculative, horizon is to alter the preoccupation of research. We can no longer purely be concerned with instances of violence, while this undoubtedly remains important. Such a preoccupation misses 'what else' is already active in living worlds and living futures or, rather, has always-already reduced the 'what else' to instances of violence. This preoccupation will be the failure of peace-as-peace. To truly commit to peace, we need to move with the alternative horizon composed from encounters sharing in breath, wherein there is a potential for everyday gestures of kindness, trust, respect, friendship, and *care*.

Interruption: KAT

My wee son Tadhg,[81]
Born a philosopher or poet.
A lyrical rebellion,
Composing the future.

My wee son Tadhg,
Born a Gaelic King.
Rising to the crown at Lia Fáil,
The regal stature of a wolfdog.

My wee son Tadhg,
Born a storyteller.
Gifted with the breath of a communal currency,
Held in a value shared by all.

My wee son Tadhg,
Born as Tadhg na sráide.
A quotidian omnipresence,
Repetitive across Béal Feirste.

My wee son Taig,
Born immoral, unjust, inhuman.
The protagonist of a religious slur.
A devious, sly KAT.

My wee son Tadhg,
Dead.

***K**ILL **A**ll **T**AIGS.*

[81] Tadgh (pronounced 'ti+gue') is a Gaelic boys name historically popular with Irish speakers but with a broad presence across the island of Ireland, especially in the south-west. Tadgh is commonly accepted to mean poet or storyteller. Due to its close association with Gaelic, Tadgh became a synecdoche for 'Irish Gaelic man' and resulted in sayings such as '*Tadhg an mhargaidh*' (Tadhg of the market) or '*Tadhg na sráide*' (Tadhg of the street). The synonymity between Tadgh and an Irish Gaelic man mobilised 'Taigh' (pronounced 'teague') as a derogatory term for Catholics during the Troubles. The slogan 'Kill All Taigs' (KAT) could be found branded on walls across Northern Ireland at the time of conflict and still, today, KAT will be brandished in graffiti in Loyalist areas, marked onto the bonfires lit on the 11th night, and even painted onto children's faces for celebrations such as the 12th (see Belfast Telegraph 2014). As a boy's name, Tadgh has almost completely died out in Northern Ireland where it is still recognised as a religious slur. There are similar derogatory terms for Protestants, such as 'Hun' and 'Jaffa'. Hun derives from a term association with German soldiers during the Second World War, with connotation of inhumane and barbaric treatment of others. The term Jaffa is the name of the fruit orange and references the Protestant and Loyalist association with the Orange Order (Stewart 2010).

Breathing a Speculative Ethics of Care

7. 1 Introduction

In Western tradition, reasoning and rationality have been understood and operationalised as the ability of the human being to dominate and tame all that is external to the consciousness of the subject. In *To be Two,* Irigaray (2000a: 70) poses the question: 'is History not simply the other name for man's intolerance toward nature?' She continues by arguing the world and sociality, as constructed by man, reflects 'a history of enduring violence, of appropriation, of domination, and not of a contribution of what is' (Irigaray 2000a: 73). Man places himself – as the singular, esteemed subject – on (t)his earth 'in a circle woven of violence and dismay, thus closing every opening' (Irigaray 2000a: 74). This circle of violence erases the potential for reciprocal relations,[82] constructing worlds within predetermined relations of assimilation, appropriation, or dependency. Agonism is essential for bringing to light the continued structures, experiences, and realities of violence and domination continuing to plague society. However, to remain in agonism perpetuates the (masculine) circle erected through violence and decay by having always-already foreclosed every opening – every possibility for peace, care, and sharing – in the originary position man's dominance guarantees for violence. Ethical relations will not be found in a world in which man only produces and invents with other bodies and with nature when he seeks their taming (Irigaray 2000a). The theoretical and empirical possibility of peace lies in a future horizon created in a sharing of breath.

A future, ethical horizon must address the nature-culture dualism. Agonism will only fail to hold a founding position when the violent split between nature-culture, subject-object, is reconceived. As Irigaray (2000a: 100) writes:

> Always separated or reduced to a single embrace or to a single deluge, always divided between one who is subject and one who is object, one who is active and one who is passive, one who has intention and one who remains nature and experiences it, we have not built a between-us.

The relationality I read to be at the heart of Irigaray's ontology circumvents the split of Western logic, the split between nature and culture, to animate a new horizon of difference from hierarchical sameness. An aerial ecology does not merely encompass human bodies but animates an elemental relationality in-

[82] Although undoubtedly drawing from Levinas' philosophy (see Chanter 1995; Grosz 1989; Ince 1996; Irigaray 1986, 1993a, 1991; Joy 2006; Whitford 1991a), Irigaray's ethics stems as much from her frustrations with Levinas as from her admiration. One of Irigaray's prime frustrations culminates around the lack of reciprocity in Levinas' ethics. Levinas engineers a foundation of non-reciprocal proximity to advance the self's passive obligation to, and responsibility for, the irreducible and unknowable other (see Levinas 1987, 1998; Lingis 1998; Morgan 2007). Transcendence, thus, is understood as beyond relationality and exterior to the body. To locate otherness within the self would, for Levinas (1969: 35-36), destroy the other: 'the intended transcendence would be thus reabsorbed into the unity of the system, destroying the radical alterity of the other.' A non-reciprocal proximity potential preserves an originary position for difference and otherness. Yet, in doing so it elevates the other to such an extreme exteriority the possibility for sharing and for a carnal proximity is precluded (Del Gatto 2015). Positioning otherness beyond a sensuous and sensible encounter approaches the other as 'pure, nude, empty' (Joy 2006: 68) or, as Irigaray (2000a: 28) writes, 'equivocation'. For an ethical relation in-between, a felt and sensuous reciprocal proximity is integral.

between nature and culture, and in-between human and non-human bodies. To multiply worlds and put difference at the forefront destabilises a one-sided, phallocentric conception of nature and animates nature and culture as dynamic (Thiele 2014b).

Irigaray's ontology can be framed as a renaturalisation.[83] Her ontology is an interlacing of the cultural and the natural, wherein the very subjectivity of the body is housed in nature and its elements.

> Nature represents possible inter-worlds – it belongs to all living beings and to none… In fact, nature, as a space of life, must serve the becoming of each one as well as a coexistence in difference. Nature is a universal that is shareable…and can thus be of use in mediating between all (Irigaray 2008a: 66-67).

To situate the body as living is, for Irigaray (2015b), the first ecological gesture – a gesture that is always-already relational. A living body moves among other living bodies in an environment, an ecology, wherein life can blossom. In this ecology all bodies are active, and all bodies have intention. Irigaray (2017: 2) writes how 'a vegetal environment can thus assist the new-born in assuming its life and entering a more peaceful world that, furthermore, takes care of its more essential good: its breath.' Breath is the entwining of nature and culture, of the human and the non-human; breath is a commoning in-between. What must be cared for in shared worlds is the commoning of breath in-between naturecultures.

Opposed to starting from subjects, the building of shared worlds requires starting from what is living. To cultivate a wisdom of renaturalisation is, for Hasana Sharp (2011: 5), to have found a 'new appreciation of ourselves as parts of nature, operating according to the same rules as anything else, invariably dependent upon infinitely many other beings, human and nonhuman.' Starting from what is living returns culture to nature and nature to culture, and entwines the spiritual and the natural. Culture cannot be the overcoming or taming of nature. Nature is not 'a point of origin or departure for the social,' but is 'itself the site of productivity' (Grosz 2012: 74). Thinking culture and nature in relation is not to reduce nature to culture or culture to nature. Differences in-between are not denied but neither are culture and nature approached as separate, unrelated oppositions. Mobilising a '(dis)continuity between nature and culture, in which the former becomes itself dynamic and productive' (Thiele 2014b: 18), destabilises the dualistic subject-object logic that maintains hierarchical verticality. An aerial ecology, composed of and in breath, is an alternative spatialisation of bodily becoming blossoming within living present of an unfolding future horizon; a space in which bodies (human and non-human) can share in ethical relations.

[83] Renaturalisation describes an ontological movement against dualisms. In her monography *Spinoza and the Politics of Renaturalisation*, Hasana Sharp mobilises Spinoza's ethics – which advance a challenge to Western dualisms through a relational ontology – as a renaturalisation with important political consequences. Sharp (2011: 6, original emphasis) borrows the term renaturalisation from Grosz and mobilised it to describe the 'power *in* nature to transform debates around recognition and rights.' Grosz's work explores the conception of nature within Irigaray's philosophy (see Grosz 1989, 1994, 2005, 2008, 2011, 2012) and places the feminist task in revitalising a view of human and nonhuman bodies as natural (see Grosz 2011). Following Sharp and Grosz, I would agree Irigaray's philosophy is a renaturalisation positing the body as natural. Irigaray (1996: 39) herself determines her political, ethical, and ontological project to be 'regulated on the basis of my[/her] natural identity.'

María Puig de la Bellacasa advances an ethics founded upon human-nonhuman relations embedded in naturecultural worlds. To view the natural and cultural in relation is, Puig de la Bellacasa (2010: 152) argues, to approach:

> ...the ethical as an everyday doing that connects the personal to the collective and decentres the human, as well as grounding ethical obligation in concrete relationalities in the making rather than on moral norms.

Encountering the other within a relational, dynamic, and mutually constitutive ecology of breath does not remove the subject, rationality, consciousness, or the cultural in favour of forces, affects, the preconscious, and the natural. Rather, breath moves in-between these registers, an oscillation – 'a constant feeding back and forward' (Dawney 2011: 601) – between culture-nature, rationality-affect, subject-body. The continual inhalation and exhalation, wherein the outside is brought in and the inside moves out, is the movement of this oscillation. Respiration does not decentre the subject per se but, mirroring Puig de la Bellacasa's (2010: 152) ethics decentres human subjectivity in the sense human beings are not posited as the masters or even the protectors of the natural world 'but as part of earth's living beings.' An ethics of breath, also, moves with a living, vital ecology in which all bodies, human and non-human, are active and intentional. Whilst to think in-between the natural and the cultural is to conceive of a new, dynamic conception of nature (see Crapo 2016; Grosz 2011, 2012), Irigaray is more concerned with rethinking the relationship between nature and culture – a relationship that is essential for animating a peaceful ethics breathing autonomously from, if in relation to, violence.

This chapter moves with breath as always-already an ethical practice of caring. Theoretically this is a movement in-between Irigaray's ethics and Puig de la Bellacasa's (2017) speculative ethics of care, wherein care is conceived as a relational making that cultivates the perpetuation and renewal of worlds, life, and bodies. After this more theoretical movement in-between Irigaray and Puig de la Bellacasa, I trace the empirical process through which micro-political gestures of care, and so the very doing of peace-weaving, emerge. I discuss the limits of tolerance as a gesture of care and doing of peace, drawing closely on the work of Michael Walzer and the vision of peace mobilised in the 2013 TBUC strategy. Next, I think care as a situated affective concern and, finally, as a loving commitment. These final two sections are grounded in the CTS* and Turas respectively. By addressing these two spaces separately I, first, describe the multiple instances and gestures of care and, secondly, the limits of caring in a Peace Process focussed upon management as opposed to transformation – limits which are not present in the space of Turas. This chapter illustrates how perception is altered when we move with a horizon of breath, as the body becomes attentive to the everyday, practical ecologies of extant peace-weaving – predicated here on care – always-already taking place within sustained encounters across Belfast.

7.2 Breath as a Natural, Ethical Caring

Peace cannot be created external to the everyday. An ethical living together, as Irigaray's thinking illustrates, cannot be formulated from a cohesive totality or a normative morality, which is always-already external to the ecological relations within which life is active and in movement (see also Addams 2002a, 2002b). Ethical relations – and so peace as a relational process, and practical expression of love, friendship, trust, healing, and kindness – reside in micropolitical practices active within the banality of ordinary life; at the level where 'personal practice is connected to a collective' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2010: 153). Ethics cannot be thought in the abstract, they are embedded and embodied practice moving within an ecology of sensitive, lively experiences on which 'one's existence depends and which one's existence affects' (Grosz in Grosz and Hill 2017: 11). This is not to conform to exterior moralities nor is it to speak of an unruly ethics. Puig de la Bellacasa opts for ethical constraint as opposed to restriction. Situated within a particular ecology, constraint cultivates 'particular ways of being and of doing' that are the very enabling of ethical gestures (Puig de la Bellacasa 2010: 163). Whilst ethics may endure spatially and temporally across varying relational ecologies, ethics themselves are in a process of active becoming. As Puig de la Bellacasa (2017: 154) explains:

> This is different from explaining ethos as ways of behaving according to pre-existing norms and conventions that sort out the good and the bad, the truth and the false – or of explaining ethical choice as the action of objective self-reliant individuals in a given situation… Rather, it can be said that norms and principles are particular modes of expression of ethos formation and deformation but do not express the whole of ethical significance.

Here the ethical is entangled in the very activity of world-making, with material and embodied implications moving with the blossoming of human and nonhuman ontologies.

Ethical moments compose and germinate in ecological relationalities. Ethics is about the ecological blossoming of life: 'it pertains to modes of maintenance, repair and continuation of life through ecological practices that unsettle traditional binaries' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 155). Ethical gestures maintain the flourishing of relationality, proximity, and reciprocity. For Irigaray, proximity is necessarily reciprocal and sensible. Proximity demands a relational response both within the self and from the other. It demands the inhalation and exhalation of breath, wherein the labour of the negative animates a continual return to the interiority of the self but, also, a reciprocal movement towards the mystery of the other. To move with the negative, is to think difference ethically (Crapo 2016). Breath cultivates the realisation that an embodied and relational way of living and doing impacts both upon the ecology within which one is embedded and one's autonomous becoming; breath is always-already an ethical practice caring for the living vitality of the self and the living vitality of other in an ongoing and shared relation in-between.

Care is deeply intertwined with the blossoming of life in all its diversity. Whilst care per se does not prominently feature within Irigaray's thinking, her ethics revolves around cultivating the blossoming of life founded within relations of differentiation in proximity. Ethical relations, for Irigaray, are based upon

a respect for difference – 'respect of the natural and spiritual life of the self and of the other' (Irigaray 2002a: 13). In terms of thinking through encounters and drawing upon Puig de la Bellacasa speculative ethics,[84] I read the respect Irigaray (2017: 15) puts at the heart of her ethics as an active gesture of care.

> Hence the necessity of attending to the preservation, not so much of a being—or Being—beyond living, but to what permits life itself to exist. It is about the energy potential which sustains life that we must now care about, and not about exuberant excesses of growth.

Breath both gives birth and sustains the body in the continual movement of life. It allows the body to blossom in its own autonomy through an ecological relation of sharing with another ontological destiny. When we fail to care for breath, we fail to care for life.

> For lack of caring about it (our breathing), we pervert life, ours and that of all with whom we supposedly share it, because we are not able to respect, to love, and to think of each in their living otherness and give them back to their own roots and growth (Irigaray 2016: 166).

The blossoming of the to-be requires care (see Irigaray 2017: viii), wherein care is everything that is done to repair, continue, and cultivate the '"interweaving" of living things that holds together worlds as we know them, that allows their perpetuation and renewal' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 161). While Puig de la Bellacasa determines these worlds to already be in existence and the ethics Irigaray conceives of is an impossibility of the future, I animate a caring ethics of breath in-between – gestures of care are extant but the possible worlds they animate are always a speculative creation of the future.

Care is not aimed at the self but neither does it put the other before the self (Puig de la Bellacasa 2010). Rather, care corresponds to breath and, so, holds autonomy and relationality in tension. Gestures and practices of care, active in-between bodies, weave relations of proximity in difference: 'caring and relating share ontological resonance' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 69). Care, at least in this mobilisation, cannot be reduced to a relation of use wherein the other is cared for in order to serve the needs of the self (Puig de la Bellacasa 2010). It is a caring for life and for living-with in elemental, aerial ecologies. Care is not concomitant to life, but it '*obliges* in that for life to be liveable it needs being fostered' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2012: 198, original emphasis). As Puig de la Bellacasa (2012: 198) illustrates:

[84] Both Irigaray and Puig de la Bellacasa advance a privileged space for women in terms of developing an ethics attentive to relational living. Irigaray (see 2002a) argues females, specifically the little girl, use a much more relational language than the little boy. Additionally, she contends women more spontaneously keep breath inside where it can be shared, whilst man uses breath to fabricate and create external to the self. Thus, Irigaray (2017: 29) seems to suggest the little girl is more likely to engage in an activity of caring in comparison to the little boy: 'it also seems that he [the little boy] makes a more important use of his legs than the little girl, who uses her arms more—to touch gently, to take care of dolls or living beings.' In a similar vein, Puig de la Bellacasa (2017: 161) asserts the reclamation of care is not a reverence for 'female values' but 'the affirmation of the centrality of a series of vital activities to the everyday 'sustainability of life' that have been historically associated with women.' Neither Irigaray nor Puig de la Bellacasa privilege the female in their ethics, as this would simply serve to switch the poles of the hierarchical horizon, yet they do both illustrate the reciprocity and relationality inherent to ethics correspond, at least historically, to a feminine way of living. Similarly, Addams' everyday ontology of peace starts from the feminine values of nurture, care, and negotiation (Shields and Soeters 2017; Yun Lee 2011). Females, for Addams, innately possess a 'remembering heart' and sense of 'bread-giving' (Elshtain 2002: 156), which can animate a care for the preservation and cultivate of life (Klosterman and Stratton 2006), and bring sharing and nurturing into the political domain (Addams 2002c).

> …although not all relations can be defined as caring, none could subsist without care. For instance, even when caring is not assured by the people or things that are perceptibly involved in a specific form of relating, in order for them to merely subsist somebody/something has (had) to be taking care somewhere or at some time. Further, care obliges us to constant fostering, not only because it is in its very nature to be about mundane maintenance and repair, but because a world's degree of liveability might well depend on the caring accomplished within it. In that sense, standing by the vital necessity of care means standing for sustainable and flourishing relations, not merely survivalist or instrumental ones.

This is an ethics of care favouring creation. Both Irigaray's ethics and Puig de la Bellacasa's ethics exceed survival to encompass the flourishing of the to-be and, in turn, invoke 'involved embodied, embedded relation in closeness with concrete conditions' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 95, see also Conradson 2003; Held 2006; Lawson 2007; Maeckelberghe 2004; Popke 2006; Staeheli and Brown 2003; Wiles 2011); care is somehow unavoidable. To move with breath as the force of relational, living vitality, then, is to always-already be embedded in ecologies of care.

7.2.1 Caring-breath versus oppressive-breath

Care disrupts both the originary position of agonism and the body as the reiteration of a mass being. A movement with care is a call to peace. It is a call moving with emerging relations of love, kindness, trust, friendship, and healing, as opposed to agonism, conflict, and violence. It calls not for grand critiques but for micropolitical moments of creation and invention (Lawson 2007; Hall and McGarrol 2013; Power and Hall 2018). Care is not a universal. Care is not about exterior moral principle nor an injunction from an authority but a response 'to a situated relationship' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 163). A micropolitical, situated ethics of care is still the making of new worlds, a new politics, and new cultures of sharing (Lawson 2007). Everyday ethical gesture of care speculatively 'look into the future non-dualistic, dialectic culture of coexistence, based on the element of air, a culture founded on mutual respect of the breath in the autonomous other, a culture in which all subjects share the air' (Škof 2015: 148). Breathing a speculative ethics of care is to weave a shared, aerial ecology of peace. Crucially, however, this is not to suggest breath is always and only a gesture of care.

Breath can be, and has been, used to incite violence and hatred. Think back to 2001 and 2004, when for weeks and weeks on end verbal sectarian abuse was loudly and violently transported through breath to attack Catholic school children walking to and from Holy Cross Girls Primary School in north Belfast. How the flutes of marching bands have been used as weapons to fill the air with hate, fear, and intimidation. Or how the breath of stories speaks repeatedly of immoral "Orangies" and evil "Prods", and manifests in deadly chants of "kill all Taigs". And how the tunes of Irish 'rebel songs' have reverberated through the west Belfast air in a violent act of claiming territory. Speaking about his exchange with Irigaray at her 2006 seminar, Donald Landes (2008: 174) recalls:

> As Luce Irigaray reminded me…contact or communication is always at risk, notably of repeating those power dynamics of oppression and violence…there is always a question of a loving-touch versus a violent or oppressive-touch.

There is, also, always a question of a caring-breath and an oppressive-breath. We can and do breathe badly – the violent history of Northern Ireland is a testament to this, as are the 'cultural wars' of the present.

A badly breathing body persists by encroaching upon others to form a mass tribe or essential being. Life can be sustained with too little or too much air. This is not, however, a life that is living, which is blossoming in the movement of becoming, but one simply persisting.[85] It is a life that does not breath autonomously but persists upon an impure, already used breath (Irigaray 2002a, 2015b). To take in too much or too little air can be destructive to the becoming of the human or nonhuman body.

> Too much or too little water and light (as well as heat [and air]) is detrimental to vegetal germination and growth. Therefore, the elements carry a generative potential within strict limits that are congruent with existence. Outside these limits, when the elements are either too abundant or too scarce, a living being is no longer able to engage with them and, consequently, cannot continue to exist. The measure of the elements propitious to life – our own and that of plants – is exceptionally fragile (Marder 2016: 139-140).

Breathing too much or too little is to breathe unconsciously. With an unbalanced oscillation of breath, differences are lived hierarchically through imposed codes of self and other or horizontally in the sameness of an external commonality and consensus. This immobilises bodies from within their own terms, wherein they are devoid of situated relations of proximity, closeness, and intimacy and so emerging, reciprocal gestures of care. When the body breathes unconsciously it locates vitality 'on the perception of and elaboration of a real' external to itself, to the detriment of an ethical relation to the self, to the world, and to the other (Irigaray 2017: 25). A body not in possession of a conscious relation or proximity to the self or to the other becomes internally and externally divided, whilst ethics is rooted within exterior moral principles and norms.

Sharing in the act of becoming necessitates consciousness. Breath, nonetheless, has been neglected. We are conditioned to think about the need for food, water, and shelter but not the nourishment of breath. Irigaray (2002a: 95-96) advances three principle reasons for neglecting the living conscious of breath.

> The first results from the unorganized multiplicity of information that overwhelms us and in the face of which our intellectual or spiritual salvation demands passing to a universal level without ensuring the necessary meditations of such a gesture. Another danger comes from the fact that man has tried to dominate nature through various instruments or tools, but instead now finds himself in large part dominated by these instruments and the products made thanks to them…this promotes neither the

[85] Irigaray (2002a: 99), here, may use the term 'instinctive animality', which refers to the phallocentric sexual economy that reduces lives to reproduction and survival. I, however, would stray away from this term aware it could be interpreted as asserting a dualistic understanding between human bodies and animal bodies.

> development of a living consciousness for each of us nor the sharing of a common life: we live isolated from one another by an already made world, obeying the orders of objects and being I, being we of the universe that surrounds us… Which constitutes a third reason for the current crisis of the subject as well as that of the community.

The Western world has largely overlooked the need to cultivate a conscious, living movement of breath. Yet, ethical gestures reside in a conscious practice of breathing. There will always be the question of a loving-breath or a violent-breath, of a conscious or unconscious breath, but the practice of an unconscious, oppressive breath does not – at least in an ecological, future horizon – hold an originary position. Returning to Landes' (2008: 174) conversation with Irigaray, the question of a caring-breath or an oppressive-breath does not 'reject speaking with each other, because the attempt at sharing communication has the distinct chance for authenticity.' There is, thus, always the potential for a caring-breath.

An ethical, conscious breathing transforms 'vital breath into a more subtle breath at the service of loving, of speaking and hearing, of thinking' and of caring (Irigaray 2015b: 254). The practice of breathing holds the capacity to 'reduce the darkness or shadows of Western consciousness' (Irigaray 2002a: 7). This is not to locate ethics purely in the mind, in a rational and logical morality. Rather, it is a felt consciousness reverberating throughout the whole body.

> An Eastern culture often corresponds to becoming cultivated, to becoming spiritual through the practice of breathing. In this becoming the body is not separated off from the mental, nor is consciousness the domination of nature by a clever know-how. It is a progressive awakening for the entire being through the channelling of breath from centers of elemental vitality to more spiritual centers: of the heart, of speech, of thought (Irigaray 2002a: 8-9).

Becoming conscious of breath is the awakening of the body to the sensual, the practical, the affective, and the tactile. We do not merely breath through the lungs, but through the pores of the skin (Marder 2015) and through 'the interiority or the intimacy of the heart' (Irigaray 2000a: 59). A practice of breathing educates the senses to the present (Irigaray 2002a), wherein the body cannot dwell in linear genealogical roots. Nor can ethics be grounded within moral norms external to one's spatiotemporal present, or peace located in elite processes and accords governed by the totality of a mass whole, but which are removed from lived relationalities in-between (Bregazzi 2019). Rather, it is to bring the attention to the concrete relationality of the body in the present. Consciousness for Irigaray moves in-between and, so, breathing consciously cannot be entrusted to one subject but must be animate within the 'dense scaffolding of things that enables and shapes' living, dynamic ecologies (Ash and Simpson 2016: 63). Breathing consciously is a being-with. It is an ecological embeddedness moving with shared reciprocal and ethical encounters caring for the life of both the self and the other.

Irigaray's thinking advances an ontology and ethics that does not view difference as necessarily and immediately agonistic. I do not turn to Irigaray or to breath to offer a perspective of a pure, utopian peace. Yet, to think with Irigaray and to move with (conscious) breath, re-thinks the political and reclaims

a forever emerging micropolitics, which opens the possibilities and potentialities for cultivating theoretical and empirical peaces that do not accept existing worlds as given (Bregazzi 2019; Puig de la Bellacasa 2017). Mobilising differential processes of bodily blossoming as ethical gestures of care, cultivates a theoretical position from which there is the potential to become attentive to already-active relations of peace. These gestures may well intertwine with instances of conflict and violence and the worlds they compose will be speculative, impossible, and of the future. Nonetheless, these gestures of care are a political, authentic reality and whilst they 'may not attract international attention in the way spectacles of violence do' (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018: 86), we cannot continue to be disclosed to the open and extant possibilities they compose – the moments and spaces of peaceful relations manifesting in the intimate and sensual expressions and affects of care.

7.3 Tolerance as a Failed Caring

Tolerance has widely been mobilised as a foundational precursor for the creation of peace. As a rhetoric present across the Peace Process, tolerance is one of the key terms reoccurring throughout the breadth of the Northern Irish peace lexicon. TBUC mobilises a vision of peace that resides in addressing the ongoing issues and challenges of sectarianism, racism, and other forms of intolerance. Intolerance remains the key challenge impeding the creation of a shared and peaceful future for Northern Ireland. As the TBUC framework states: 'we believe that we cannot build a united community unless the fundamental issues of division and intolerance are specifically tackled' (Northern Ireland Executive 2013: 19). Division is positioned as the product of intolerance and, thus, the creation of a united and shared Northern Irish society resides in its opposite – with the cultivation of tolerance. Tolerance, intertwined with and mobilised in little distinction from respect, is designated as one of the underpinning principles of the TBUC framework: 'we recognise that tolerance and respect are vital to building a community where cultural expression can be celebrated and embraced' (Northern Ireland Executive 2013: 88). Peace and a united Northern Irish society, free from prejudice, hate and intolerance, will be built upon the cultivation of tolerance between the Protestant and Catholic community.

Michael Walzer (1997: 10) conceives of tolerance as an 'attitude or state of mind' producing a continuum of peaceful possibilities. The first possibility is a simple, 'resigned acceptance of difference for the sake of peace' (Walzer 1997: 10-11).[86] The second resides in the passive and banal indifference to difference and, the third, coalesces around recognising the other holds rights, even if the expression of those rights are viewed from a hierarchical position of distaste and unattractiveness. These three attitudes of tolerance can be likened to what Ervin Goffman (1963) has called civil inattention. Civil inattention names a meeting wherein one gives enough to appreciate the other is present before immediately

[86] Rainer Forst (2003), a student of Jürgen Habermas, mobilises a continuum of tolerance similar to Walzer: permission, co-existence, respect, and esteem. In Forst's continuum, the first iteration is understood as 'giving permission to' which undeniably is hierarchical and even condescending (Gill, Johnstone and Williams 2012: 515).

withdrawing this attention. Tolerance, as an act of civil inattention, informs the act of recognition scripting contact in Northern Ireland today.

The need to categorise and 'box' bodies was discussed across the breadth of interviews I conducted. The predominant academic narrative surrounding contact in Northern Ireland coalesces around fear. It was not always a fear of the other *per se* that aligned bodies to the choreographed dance of recognition but, at times, it was a fear of offending the other which induced the need to know. As Mark discussed:

> *I was in New York and I was with a bunch of guys from England. We were in a restaurant and a girl came over to the table to serve us. She was from Belfast. I could see the other guys kind of having this side conversation, while I was having this conversation with this waitress and what they were basically doing was watching the two of us dance around where are you from, what part of Belfast, what school did you go to, and the two of us sort of almost sizing each other up, not from any other perspective apart from not to cause offence, do you know what I mean, so not to say the wrong thing. So, I wasn't out to degrade or annoy or whatever, it was actually the opposite, to make sure you didn't, but they thought this was quite funny this kind of dance around whereas where they were from it didn't really matter, didn't really care what you said or whatever, whereas we have that sort of dance.*

Mark danced with the waitress with the intention of not causing offence. This intention necessitated recognising the waitress as either Catholic or Protestant, as this label predetermines what will and will not cause offence, what can and cannot be said. Framed as the positive inversion of intolerance, tolerance always falls back upon an agonistic position viewing sociality as innately violent and irrevocably conflictual – there is always-already the potential for offence. This potential is managed through a civil tolerance corresponding to a normative morality produced external to living experience. External morality approaches the other 'according to general principles that might be suitable for whatever other, but that do not care about their own individuation' (Irigaray 2015a: 282).

Áine also discusses how a moralistic attitude of tolerance, operative within a predetermined recognition, aligns contact in Northern Ireland to an external civility.

> *When I came here first, I was very conscious of this, because as soon as people hear my accent then they make assumptions. People will be very quick to let me know that they were Catholic or if they weren't Catholic that they were okay with the Catholics and they would drop it in. So as soon as the conversation was started, you know, even at the bus stop, say, simplest of things and then very quickly there would be something like, oh when I was coming from Mass on Sunday, you know or it would be a comment like, well you know I was down in your part of the country last year, you know, and so the signal has been sent that we're all okay here. I found that fascinating and kind of intriguing that people are very keen to, I suppose very keen to position themselves visibly or let you know how they're standing or what.*

Áine gives voice to what can be described as a civil tolerance. On hearing Áine's accent, people are quick to indicate they are okay with her being from the Republic of Ireland, yet as soon as the comment of attention is made it is quickly withdrawn 'so as to express that...[she] does not constitute a target of

special curiosity or design' (Goffman 1963: 84). Civil inattention tangibly demonstrates a lack of suspicion, fear, or contention in contact. It establishes civility and politeness in a courteous gesture, which can provide a coping mechanism and catharsis for managing the borders, dualisms, and divisions characterising contemporary Belfast (Seidman 2012; Smyth and McKnight 2013) and, even, suggests tolerance of the differences these divisions are predicated upon (Boyd 2006; Mac Ginty 2014). These courteous moments, which have been thought as an everyday act of kindness (Laurier and Philo 2006), potentially offer 'reservoirs of hope' (Thrift 2005: 147, see also Gill, Johnstone and Williams 2012; Mac Ginty 2014). They reduce the violence of chance contact and make it more bearable but, nonetheless, they correspond to normative codes of behaviour containing expectations regarding the appropriate way of behaving (Valentine 2008) to produce polite, non-violent spaces of coexistence (Cresswell 1996). Coexistence, however, should not be confused with peace (Courtheyn 2018).

Mark illustrates how once the body is known to be Catholic or Protestant, the subsequent interaction can then be regulated and constrained so *as "not to cause offence"* or *"say the wrong thing."* This regulation engineers 'reserved, tepid, less spontaneous' interactions as bodies orientate to one and other through external accepted standards of civility and politeness (Papacharissi 2004: 260, see also Caldwell 2012): *"…it's just sort of walking on eggshells, not wanting to cause offence" (Róisín)*. Gestures of tolerance may be the best that can be achieved when relations are devoid of a care for relational limits, but they cannot 'amount to perceiving and respecting the irreducibility of the other, to recognizing the insurmountable difference of the other in relation to us' (Irigaray 2015b: 266). Tolerance is an externally imposed gesture of civility that maintains the dualism of the self and other, and simply seeks to infuse the terms of recognition between us and them with an external moralistic norm, which sustains separation alongside 'an antagonism towards alterity' (Doran 2010: 140). A tolerant horizon approaches differences with a polite disdain (Brown 2006; Dobbernack and Mohdood 2011; Schmidt-Leukel 2002; Valentine 2008). Relations here, then, are held in a stasis. They remain at the level of discourse, as bodies respond to the one and the other as representatives of pre-established discursive categories, even while they maintain a civil politeness. This cannot be the making of a relational horizon, as the worlds it constructs are still exterior to the wonder of the encounter, and prior to the active sensing body and its (peace-full) affects.

Peace demands a relational ontology that is at once a call to ethics. It demands the becoming of a novel horizon, within which bodies are not approached from an a priori civility cultivating gestures of tolerance. Rather, it demands a care for life in its living. Whereas tolerance is understood rationally and as an external, universal norm, 'care is not drawn on the political theorist's map, it is…more practical than principle' (Brown 2003: 835). Tolerance cannot be an ethical gesture because it is not the becoming of a reciprocal, proximate, and situated gesture of care. However, if we return to Walzer's iterations of tolerance, the fourth and fifth attitudes are much more akin to Irigaray's thinking. Walzer (1997: 11) determines the fourth attitude of tolerance to be an expression of openness to the other: 'curiosity;

perhaps even respect, a willingness to listen and learn.' The fourth attitude is connected both to curiosity and listening and, so, suggests a gesture that may care for the in-between spacing of relational limits.

Walzer's fourth iteration grounds curiosity and, acutely, listening within learning and so approaches the other with a desire for understanding, reasoning, and knowledge. The development of understanding, also, holds a central place within the TBUC strategy and is regarded as integral to achieving the overall aim of building 'a new, reconciled and shared society' (Northern Ireland Executive 2013: 2). Understanding features in the four key priorities of peace detailed in the TBUC strategy but holds acute emphasis regarding 'our cultural expression'.

> We believe that increasing understanding of differing views and perspectives is vital to strengthening our community's capacity to embrace and celebrate diversity. A deeper understanding of cultural identity and its expression will help to break down the elements of mistrust that have developed within and between sections of the community. Through this increased understanding we believe that we can create a more united community, where cultural diversity can be embraced rather than treated with suspicion, and celebrated rather than feared (Northern Ireland Executive 2013: 88).

TBUC mirrors previous peace strategies and advances understanding as a tool for moving away from the violence and division of the past and creating a united community.[87] Furthermore, TBUC promotes understanding as a precursor to creating respect and tolerance.

> We recognise that tolerance and respect are vital to building a community where cultural expression can be celebrated and embraced. This *tolerance and mutual respect can be built through increasing understanding* of the range of cultural traditions that exist here and encouraging a change in attitudes that will lead to a wider perspective on cultural expression (Northern Ireland Executive 2013: 88, my emphasis).

Tolerance, then, will be founded upon an ethics of mutuality, wherein the other is not dehumanised[88] but approached as a human being and a fellow 'person'.

To name a body as a person is to name how a body wants to be seen. Bodies want to be recognised not as things or objects buts as persons belonging to the community of *human*ity, who together share in rational and reciprocal actions that treat the one and the other as common, universal persons. Persons are considered as the bearers of reason, dignity, understanding. They are the bodies who have achieved

[87] PEACE IV, notably in its Cooperation Programme, mirrors the TBUC framework and promotes understanding as a tool for achieving peace: 'PEACE IV will place a strong emphasis on promoting cross-community relations and understanding in order to create a more cohesive society' (SEUPB 2014: 1). For example, PEACE IV's objective of 'building positive relations at a local level' (total value €35.3 million) explicitly references 'mutual understanding' as an indicative action (see SEUPB 2016) and has funded projects, such as, the Lisburn and Castlereagh City Council's programme 'Understanding Culture Through Sport, Art and Environment'.

[88] Violence and sectarian conflict are often seen to reside in a narrative of dehumanisation. To define and recognise the other as sub-human, morally disengages those who are wielding violence from those who are suffering at the hands of violence (Breneau and Kteily 2017; Ramsay 2016). The narrative of dehumanisation has a long history on the island of Ireland: it was integral to the justification of colonial powers (see Breneau and Kteily 2017), reproduced during the Troubles, and sustained in the post-conflict period through inherited truths and standardised perceptions of hate, immorality, and fear (McAlister, Haydon and Scraton 2013).

'personhood' by controlling emotional and illogical bodily impulses and sensuous events through moral relations with other fellow persons (Sharp 2011). It is as persons that we have the potential to be tolerant. Persons hold the capacity to supersede irrational, bad recognition, with an 'ethical' recognition capable of producing a more truthful knowing and a *better* understanding. This gives rise to a politics of 'seeing better' that takes as its foundation a 'dignity and respect owed to all human being *qua* human' (Sharp 2011: 164, original emphasis): a mutual tolerance. An ethics of understanding and tolerance still reproduces the other in reference to the self, only now in the commonness of persons opposed to relations of opposition. In a politics of seeing better, the other is at best 'respected in the name of tolerance, loved in God, or recognised as an equal or a fellow human' (Irigaray 2002a: 125). Seeing better can only ever result in sameness. Potentially it is only when we move with an ethical, as opposed to primarily political, basis for relations that peace can extend beyond the non-violence of externally imposed tolerated coexistence. It is only when difference and peace are in a dialectical movement, which is at once ontological *and* ethical, that shared worlds can be built.

Walzer's final iteration of tolerance is characterised by an affirmation of difference. The fifth iteration places an enthusiastic and aesthetic endorsement of difference 'as a necessary condition for human flourishing, one that offers to individual men and women the choices that make their autonomy meaningful' (Walzer 1997: 11). Walzer (1997: 11) himself questions whether this fifth attitude falls outside, or more precisely beyond, tolerance: 'how can I be said to tolerate what I in fact endorse?' The fifth iteration is not so much a tolerance of difference but an ethical gesture caring for life and living in all its variation. It extends the possibility of tolerance beyond a mutual acceptance of the other as other and above a curiosity for learning about the other as a person. This fifth iteration – as with the continuum in its entirety – remains firmly grounded within a human culture, where it is reserved as an exclusive attitude and state of *mind* of logical and rational human persons.

Breath is neither simply a cultural element or solely a nature element, but an ecological and aerial oscillation active in-between the natural and cultural and in-between the mind and body. Grounded within a human culture of persons, Walzer's fifth iteration remains as an external, normative principle operative via a politics of recognition. The fifth iteration of tolerance cares for the flourishing of the life and of the living body who is recognised as a *person*; care for the autonomous body is predicated on the universal, external recognition of human persons. An ethics of breath cannot reside in an ethics or politics of recognition. Breath moves prior to the imposition of form animating an ethics that exceeds recognition. The in-between oscillation of breath decentres human subjectivity and, instead, opts for a relational, embodied, and shared ethics proceeding human form. Gestures of care extending beyond the moral constraints and normative principles of human obligation reside in this respiring oscillation.

7.4 Care as a situated, affective agency

Standing in the Synagogue, we tentatively stretched out our arms and lifted our hands to face the bodies either side of us. We each searched for the raised hand to our right and the raised hand to our left. We lay our palms flat on one and other. An unfamiliar touch. A caress felt with intimate acuteness. An awareness of another body's skin, softness, and heat. Gently pushing palms against palms, we lifted one leg off the floor and held it bent at the knee. Palm-to-palm, ninety-four women stood strong, tall, and upright on one leg; we were supported and balanced by sharing in the resilience, care, and tenacity of feminine touch.

Research journal, March 8th 2017, CTS*'s 2017 Women's Day Brunch

It was a cold and dreary February morning and the first residential with a newly established women's group based just outside of Belfast. Helen and Bella, two friendly and confident ladies, were running the holistic resilience component of the programme. The session consisted of an hour-long interactive workshop focussed around holistic, eastern practices for boosting health and energy, including self-shiatsu techniques, energising acupressure points, and a relaxation exercise, followed by individual massages for each of the participants.

Suddenly we were all up on our feet and rubbing our hands together to release energy. The room was filled with the soft, dry sound of palms moving together: back and forth, over and under, round and round. My hands quickly became warm, cultivating a heat through their active touch. Following Helen's direction, we began to transfer the energy cultivated between our hands to the other parts of the body. We started with the face. Hands moved over eyes, lips, cheeks, the nose and the chin, and smoothed out the frown line. A warm, gentle touch. Each time we returned to rubbing our palms together to create more energy. The rubbing become more purposeful as initial inhibitions faded. Finishing off the face, we began to repetitively tap warm fingers lightly against the head. We then moved to the neck, the abdomen, the back, the kidneys and the legs, paying attention to the whole body. There was a comfort in feeling this heat move around as it attends to the whole body. The bodies engaged in this practice of care started moving with more assertiveness, with a faster tempo, and a livelier rhythm. The room got warmer and brighter, as the energy and heat moved and entangled in the air.

At the edge of the chair and poised upright, head cocked, an eagerness hung in the air as we waited to hear about what we would be doing next. Bella and Helen walked us around the body's acupuncture points that can be energised through touch. Thumbs, pushing firmly but gently, moved from the energy point in the wrist to help with nausea, to the back of the head to relieve headaches and migraines. They caressed a point in the ankle that aids the balancing of hormones and, finally, the centre of the palm to bring the body to a relaxed and calm state. At each energy point the thumbs touch upon the body applying pressure in a small circular motion. Round and round. Helen and Bella responded to calls of "oww" or "I can't feel it" and moved around the room touching upon the bodily points with a gentle but firm pressure; a touch that was not painful but strong and vigorous. I felt the strength of my own

thumb caress my palm. Each point had to be listened to and the level of pressure applied responsive to the intimate feeling of touch. All senses, attention, and focus turned inwards to the internal energy points and to the felt circular movement of touching pressure.

Research Journal, February 23rd 2017

In the holistic resilience workshop, small acts of embodied care were practiced and acutely felt (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017). This care differed from the common modes of care known by the women, many of whom were on antidepressants. The tactility and materiality of touch cultivates a sensible perception or an internal listening-to composed from a felt intimacy and proximity responsive to the body in the present. A caring touch increases the embodied, yet always relationally situated, capacity to 'feel, act and perceive' (Massumi 2015: 208) – a relation of care implicating the living vitality and the movement of the body. Following the workshop, the women spoke excitedly, with an increased energy and enthusiastic spirit, about the calming liveliness animated from touching their bodies in a tactile and intimately attentive practice of care.

Following on from the self-shiatsu techniques, Helen and Bella guided the workshop to a conversation around sleep. Throughout the room there was an acknowledgement of the difficulties of getting a good night's sleep. Helen and Bella introduced a simply breathing technique to help bring the body to a relaxed state from which sleep follows.

Breath moved in and out of the body. Following Helen's counts the body gently inhaled for one, two, three counts, before slowing exhaling for one, two, three, four. Over and over. One, two, three. One, two, three, four. One, two, three. One, two, three four. My eyes closed, and the sounds of Helen's voice faded into the background, as my body folded in and out of its own respiration.

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The practice of respiration removed the body from externally imposed roles, duties, norms, and obligations, where it can be listened-to in an embodied stillness and quietness. This attentiveness is a gesture of care opening the body to calmness, to peace, and to connectedness. Helen spoke about the need to not feed the dark side of the body – the side that decreases the life and power of the body – with external words, feelings, and emotions and with exterior experiences, actions, and habits implicating the body with anger, hate, jealousy, sadness, self-pity, and self-loathing. Attentiveness needs to be reoriented to the interior, and to the embodied actions and relational touch of love, peace, harmony, kindness, compassion, generosity, and trust that cares for the blossoming of life. Helen continued by illustrating the body does not simply rely of food, exercise, water, and shelter for life but must also be nourished with sounds, silences, conversations, forces, positive energy, and breath, each of which care for and listen-to the whole-body in a felt and open attentiveness.

The afternoon session entailed an arts workshop. Whilst the morning holistic session was largely constructed around cultivating an internal gesture of care, the afternoon session animated gestures of care responsive to both the interior and relational life of the body. This session was run by a young, petite and noticeably pregnant lady called Emma who guided the ladies through the activity of silk

painting. The ladies first revealed their canvas by stretching out a long piece of shimmering, white silk and pinning it to a wooden frame. Emma had brought with her a range of different images relating to the themes of womanhood and sisterhood.

> *Conversation moved across the tables from all angles, entwining in the middle. The ladies were engrossed in a discussion of what to paint. Each person voiced their ideas and offered words and nods of encouragement as they quietly listened-to others, letting their thoughts and ideas fill the air. Emma has brought a series of different images for inspiration and these were now flying through open hands and shuffled through with searching eyes. The pace slowed as the images were cautiously, and with a gentle care, placed and arranged upon the silk. All hands, arms, fingers and eyes were active in carving out a space on the silk for each idea and body. A central image was conceived to bring together and connect all the images – the braid composed from the intertwining the hair of four different women; blonde, brown, grey, and black, each remaining distinct as they share within the entangled relation (see figure 24).*
>
> *With the beginnings of an idea germinating among the active bodies, Emma urged the women to put pencil to the silk and begin to sketch out the images. Hesitation filled the air; a concern it would be wrong, or they would not be good enough. Urged by one and other, the pencils were soon gliding across the silk as feint silver lines, swirls, circles, edges, and points emerged. There was a need to be aware of other bodies and care for the strokes of different pencils, to attend to their presence to avoid collision, and protect their space to prevent their erasure. Conversation filled the air as the bodies continued to draw; an image made in the sharing of breath was slowly materialising on the silk. Bodies moved slowly and purposefully. Pressure was applied gently. Colours chosen with thought and attention. Opinions asked and gifted. Quickly and intimately, bodies came to care for this piece of silk, which materialised the emerging entangling of the group.*
>
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In this moment of working together, of listening-to one and other, and bouncing ideas and thoughts off one and other, the women shared in active relations of care moving back and forth in-between each and every body.

As the women progressed from the feint silver of the pencil to the colourful paint, the image was given life. It danced. It moved. It was bright and beautiful. Butterflies caressed and flowers pirouetted. Just as the image gained a liveliness, so did the women. Their thoughts, visions, and ideas became filled with colour, and their own bodies blossomed and grew into the space alongside the flowering of the silk. Derek McCormack (2003: 503) writes 'the question is not only "how far can we care" but also becomes one of cultivating a commitment to those relations that may increase the intensity of attachment and connectivity.' Sharing with the other cannot reside in an internal gesture of care that attends to only our vital preservation and growth. To cultivate a life towards sharing require us to care both about our own blossoming and 'our relational potential' (Irigaray 2016: 96). The care for this blossoming was projected onto a care for the silk: in the central image of sisterhood and the entwinement of the hair braid; in the

Figure. 24. The silk painting produced by the ladies. The focal point of the painting is the intertwining of the three different hair braids (author's own March 2nd 2017).

caring for each person's spaces; in attending to each other's concerns; and in the exhaling words of encouragement and praise that voiced a faith in an other body. Together they created a shared image which spoke of each body in an autonomous voice whilst folding these voices together in an image belonging to no one and all of them. In the attentiveness and tactility of gestures, both towards each other and the silk painting, care became an embodied, sensuous, and felt activity of relation.

Care as an affective force is both something that we do and sense. Puig de la Bellacasa (2017: 162) situates the affective force of care 'in the phrase 'I care'.' The statement 'I care' cannot be reduced to an external rationality, a moral norm, or a static principle. These ladies know one another and engage in many activities and conversations together, but in the embodied, relatively mundane activity of silk painting bodies committed to shared experiences of care. This commitment moves with the embodied realisation that 'we are already ordinary everyday companions' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 199-200), entwined in a relational ecology of blossoming together through 'carnal attentiveness' and connectivity (Irigaray 1996: 124). Attachment and connectivity intensify the body's relational potential, as the body gains a sense of comfort in being part of something: a commonality and togetherness in the commitment to the silk painting but, and more importantly, to the cultivation of the space as an emerging ecology of care (Darling 2010).

Relations and experiences of care are always situated. Puig de la Bellacasa (2017) suggests 'care work becomes better when it is done again,' arguing care increases with repetition, greater attention, and fine-tuning. In the internal comfort and embodied familiarity of repetition, shared ecological worlds become less speculative and increasingly present to the point where they become habitual. Although the activity of painting on silk never became habitual for the women, when they picked up the paint brush in the second workshop, about a week after the first, their movements were more confident, assured, and comfortable. Movements in and with shared ecological worlds becomes easier and less risky through sustained repetition. As relational potential blossoms, the body moves almost unnoticed in the future of an alternative horizon that feels real because it is not, or at least no longer, felt all that much. Repetitions of care, however, are only active, affective, and ethical when their movements continue to be woven from situated relations.

In the arena of conflict transformation and peacebuilding, gestures of care are experienced in relations of intimacy, faithfulness, attentiveness, and connectivity. However, there exists a tension as affectivity is also 'part of situations of care, as oppressive burden,' exhaustion, and fatigue (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 5). The activities of the peacebuilding sector, which largely predate the Good Friday Agreement, have become plagued with fatigue. The Northern Ireland Executive's Director of Good Relations voiced her concern surrounding such fatigue – which is intimately tied to the uncertainty and precarity of funding – when I asked her about the greatest challenges facing peacebuilding in Northern Ireland today.

> *I think funding is a challenge and increasingly the need to be able to relate outputs to outcomes – and you'll know this from the work CTS* do and the women's programmes – such as 'what difference does it make?', 'how sustainable is it?'. So that's a big challenge. I think the other challenge will be Brexit and a possible end of EU funding, not within the next year but on a long-term basis and organisations need to start to plan for that. I think as we increasingly, and it is related to this as we ramp-up the accountability, I think capacity within community groups to be able to deal with that because of the wide range of community groups we have, not all have the same capacity and some are effectively one man or two-man bands. There is also like almost a community and voluntary sector fatigue out there.*

There have been groups that have been struggling on at this work for years and I've met quite a number of people who have been like, I've been at the job now for, I've been doing this now for twenty years I've had enough you know, so there is a lot of that type of fatigue.

The Director of Good Relations illustrates how conflict transformation work has been an exhausting struggle for decades: segregation still characterises Northern Ireland in its breadth; sectarianism is still rife; paramilitary groups are still active and continue to yield a dominating force and control, particularly within working class communities; politics remains a zero-sum battle of green or orange; and culture wars surrounding marching and the Irish language sustains divisions and compel hard-line views. Affectivity cannot make it to care without reiteration, yet this reiteration cannot become a moral intention wherein affectivity produces a disposition to 'care about' that fails to maintain a 'caring for' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017). The Peace Process has engineered relations in which bodies are affected with a disposition of caring about not caring for.

The Peace Process has commodified and institutionalised good relations as a political goal, at the same time as maintaining the 'two communities' model (Graham and Nash 2006). It is the interplay between these two factors that produce a disposition of caring about. Peacebuilding organisations and practitioners have been forced to align their actions to funders and, thus, to the vision of peace projected by the Executive. Funders demand a direct response aligning to the commodity, to the determined form of peacebuilding work and the predefined vision, they are investing in. The actions of those doing peacebuilding work, then, have been externalised, with the consequence care is restricted as it becomes associated with 'direct helping actions' (Schrader 2015). Here, care is 'limited by a progressive view oriented to an end or a defined object of care' (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017: 233). Yet, in holding the 'two communities' model in place the 'end' is an impossibility, as peace and care cannot be found in the current horizon of binary identity politics. This affects bodies coordinating and facilitating peacebuilding work with fatigue as organisations and practitioners are sustained in an externally oriented activity towards an impossible end; they are affected with a disposition to 'care about' opposed to 'caring for'. Affectivity cannot coalesce in external moral norms or within a linear trajectory of activity directly translatable across space and time. When this happens, we move from a caring-breath to an oppressive-breath, from a positive affective relation to a negative affective relation, within which the body's capacity for living is reduced or held in the stasis of what is.

The Peace Process maintains and pulls back activities of peacebuilding to an external, moral norm of caring about opposed to a situated relation of caring for. As peacebuilding has become a progressively important arena of governmental control, civil society and the community and voluntary sector have become another interest group subordinate to elected representatives. As Nicholas Acheson and Carl Milofsky (2008: 77) state: since executive stability the Peace Process has failed to 'connect with the creativity of people at the local community level, but tries instead to utilise those local communities to promote the interests and agendas of those at the level of political elites.' The TBUC strategy acknowledges the need for a coordinated effort between the political elite, local representatives, and

civil society. Yet, across the three peace frameworks there is continual reference to the need for the political elites to provide *the* leading role:

> As an Executive, we believe firmly in the potential of our people and we are committed to making our society a better place for all – regardless of background, political opinion, religious belief or race. We acknowledge that leadership at a political level is a vital ingredient in driving this change. However, we also recognise that achieving the vision set out in this Strategy is not solely the responsibility of the Executive – and work by everyone to achieve it must continue and intensify – including individuals, groups and agencies at a local level (Northern Ireland Executive 2013: 11).

Civil society and the community and voluntary sector can only play an active role in the Peace Process to extent they have the opportunity to do so, and the provision of such opportunity lies within governmental hands. Exteriority reduces the capacity for situated peacebuilding work and aligns ethics to normative principles transportable across time, space, and bodies.

Repetition of peacebuilding work is heightened in the current climate, where the community and voluntary sector are continually facing increasing uncertainty regarding funding. Funders demand tangible outcomes that force peacebuilding to align to activities and programmes with a 'quantifiable output' (see Byrne et al. 2009; Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018; Skarlato et al. 2016). Prior to any training event the small CTS* office tended to be overcome, with Lauren, Jasmine, and I flapping around the room checking we had all the resources needed and, crucially, the sign-in sheet and evaluation forms that evidence the running of the event. The CTS* would use the evaluation forms for developing other training packages but, more importantly, they would be used to construct a report detailing the success of the programme and illustrating value for money.[89] With a pressure to evidence the success and benefits gained from participation, evaluation forms seek to chart something observable and universal; they seek to 'quantify' 'subtle and intangible changes in people's perceptions, attitudes, [and] interests' (Skarlato et al. 2016: 175). The CTS*'s evaluation forms, then, overwhelmingly centre around understanding, with a common question being: "what three things have you learnt today that you didn't know before?" The process of external evaluation and measurement regulates peacebuilding work (Mac Ginty 2014), with the consequence 'the enchanted world is always in the process of being superseded by a calculable world' (Bennet 2001: 58). The fatigue plaguing the peacebuilding sector largely resides in the repetitive and static nature of peacebuilding that is forced to work with an external ethics, vision, and morality, which fails to cultivate felt and sensuous gestures of care in embodied and embedded relations of situated living.

[89] The pressure to evidence success has made the community and voluntary sector increasingly vulnerable due to the difficulty of quantifying their contribution to broader social change (Acheson et al. 2006; Power 2011). Additionally, it has produced a disjuncture whereby 'funders tend to think that the problems have been solved,' whilst the majority of practitioner stress the continuing presence of longstanding issues (Morrow, Faulkner-Byrne and Pettis 2018: 30).

The occurrence of repetition exceeds far beyond those who engineer peacebuilding and is replicated in the reoccurrence of the bodies involved in activities building peace. Frank noted this repetition.

> *I think one of the problems that they have as well, we have spoken a lot about these so-called community organisations and I really don't like them, they are all dealing with the same people. Cross-community groups are dealing with the same people. Nobody is really reaching the communities. Those community groups are all working among themselves, they all bring the same models to the same people, and the kids and the adults who really count are not being reached.*

The CTS* will often be forced to engage the same community groups year on year across the breadth of their peacebuilding work. Funding bodies require maximum impact and, thus, call for a guaranteed high number of participants, which may have to be recruited at short notice. This propels peacebuilding organisations and charities towards ready-made and already-active groups who, from their involvement in previous programmes, they know to be reliable and committed. These groups, however, move through peacebuilding programmes as if on a conveyor belt and their bodies become closed off from, and desensitised to, the situatedness of each peacebuilding activity, and to the relations and feeling of the space. Here, there is the risk that repetition will become externalised. In this externalisation, the repetition of care becomes directed towards an end goal concerned with the 'right of having', opposed to a situated iteration cultivating an 'ethics of living'.

Irigaray (seminar 2019) distinguishes between a right of having and an ethics of life. The former refers to property, physical goods, and objects that we can own, claim, and determine solely as ours. It is upon these rights that the Western world bestows protection and care. An ethics of life, in contrast, corresponds to the care for life, wherein relations of breath are our 'first and most radical need' (Irigaray 2002a: 74). The right of having was animated continually by the participants involved in the CTS*'s peacebuilding work: in the telephone calls before a site visit requesting food that met this month's weight loss diet; demands for the bus to pick people up from and drop them off outside of their houses; complaints the food was not good enough or there was less food than at the last peacebuilding workshop; the incessant questioning of when the group was going to get food; the requests for soft-drinks opposed to water; the barging and pushing to be at the front of the buffet line; and in bodies returning to the buffet for a second plate before others had even eaten. Although by no means consistent across and among groups, the sense of entitlement and greed displayed by several participants, and on a series of occasions, potentially stems from their repeated involvement in peacebuilding work. In repetitive play there is no time or space for growing, creating, or sharing (Irigaray 2016). Repetition removes bodies from the extant relations of care and comparatively frames a space in the externality of past experiences. Care needs to be continually iterated, but this reiteration cannot be reduced to a repetition but should be performed as a gesture moving with an ethics of life respiring in the now.

7.5 Care as a Loving Obligation

The Turas project lives on a love for and commitment to the Irish language. The project was conceived from love and this love continues to define the space eight years after the first class. Turas is not a business or a profitable organisation. The project was not conceived with the intention of peacebuilding.[90] The birth of the project lay in Linda Ervine's love for the Irish language and her desire to continue learning a language she had fallen in love with.

Linda suffered a period of ill health that culminated in her reducing her hours as a secondary school teacher. Working fewer hours, Linda joined a local east Belfast women's group. The group were involved in a cross-community peacebuilding project, alongside a women's group based in Short Strand, a Catholic enclave that backs on to the Newtownards Road. The two group would meet once a week, one week in East Belfast Mission on the Newtownards Road and one week in Short Strand Community Centre. As part of this cross-community project, the two groups together embarked upon an introductory Irish language course and Linda, 'the Protestant from east Belfast', immediately feel in the love with the language.

Linda: *Well I got introduced to the language through a thing here, it was like a wee, erm like I was part of the women's group, and I actually joined the women's group cause I thought right this will get my head cause Brian said to me you're overworked, you work too much, you're over preparing and I was obsessed, and I was losing my confidence and I felt like no matter how much I'd prepared it's not enough, it's not enough.*

Ciara: *And because you sort of feel, did you feel it like slipping back to how you'd felt when you were young?*

Linda: *Yeah, yeah.*

Ciara: *That must have been very scary?*

Linda: *And Brian was also, he was a PUP Leader which was very, very stressful, so there was a lot, just a very stressful time and I think I was very, you know, started to get sort of panicky and things and it was frightening. So I did, I went, I joined the women's group to kinda get away from that and sort of do something. I enjoyed the craic, it was good craic, and I was introduced to the Irish language, I fell in love with it, started going to classes.*

Ciara: *Where were you going to classes then?*

Linda: *Over An Droichead. You know, so and I used to meet my friend and I used to walk down…it was really nice. It was really lovely. It was just such a, such a lovely wee window in the week, you know. But umm, what happened then was, umm, I started, started to just kinda read about the Irish language, started to sort of, all this different stuff that was going on, started to realise, you know, that there was so much to it than what I had sort of thought, you know.*

[90] Whilst today Turas taps into peacebuilding funding, it remains a space composed of more organic encounters opposed to engineered contact. Turas does not conform to an elite vision of peacebuilding but reshapes this vision to describe what is always-already happening in Turas.

From her first encounter, Linda fell in love with the Irish language. What initiates this love is difficult to pinpoint, and more than likely a series of things: the language itself; a respite from the normality and tension of everyday life; an activity that was just for her and nobody else; a space free from stress. It was the whole experience of learning the language and connecting to the history of the language that Linda loved.

Considering Linda's background, her rooting to east Belfast and the Ervine family, her initial draw to Gaelic may have been fragile. Yet, to move towards something in love is the animation of a 'form of relation that one finds oneself…nurturing or caring for' (Povinelli 2011: 28). To nurture and care for the Irish language, and specifically for its presence in east Belfast and within the Protestant community more generally, required Linda to make a choice. Whilst there may be very little choice in Linda's first movements towards the Irish language, in the love that pulsated throughout her body in hearing and speaking Gaelic, care entails an immanent obligation that is reinforced the more the body choses to engage, the more the body choses to move in the interval in-between (Olkowski 2000). As Elizabeth Povinelli (2011: 33) writes:

> By "immanent obligation" I am referring to a form of relationality that one finds oneself drawn to and finds oneself nurturing, or caring for... This being "drawn to"…is often initially a very fragile connection, a sense of an immanent connectivity. Choices are then made to enrich and intensify these connections.

Affected with a loving connection for the Irish language, Linda made what was undoubtedly a controversial and largely unprecedented choice in seeking out Irish language classes at An Droichead, in south Belfast. These weekly classes provided a happy, enjoyable window in Linda's week, at a time when she was suffering from illness and poor mental health. At this moment Linda's choice to continue to learn Irish did not extend far beyond herself, yet this soon changed.

The local media, due to Linda's close association with Unionism, quickly noted her engagement with the Irish language. Following a radio interview in which Linda discussed how she was learning Irish, both Linda and the East Belfast Mission were inundated with calls enquiring about Irish language classes which, at the time, did not exist:

> Linda: *…then what happened was a local journalist found out that I was learning Irish, so it ended up in a few newspapers.*
>
> Ciara: *Because of Brian?*
>
> Linda: *Because of Brian and I gave a wee, umm, I gave a wee interview on, umm, the umm, radio too, I was just trying to think which happened first, oh yeah and then the next thing I mentioned East Belfast Mission in a wee radio interview and then the next thing that happened was they were approaching me, people who wanted to come and go to the classes, which didn't exist of course. So, we started up our own class.*

Propelled internally by her love for the Irish language, alongside the surge of interest following the radio interview, Linda began to conceive on an idea for an Irish language school in east Belfast.

Linda was under no external obligation to setup and run Turas. Linda's love for Gaelic and her intimate joy of learning the language animated an immanent obligation of care and connectivity she consciously chose to intensify and enrich. This movement has ensured the continuing success and growth of Turas, as a space open to everyone and anyone who shares in a love for Gaelic regardless of territorial rooting, ancestral lineage, or religious background. Linda has, particularly in the beginning, faced pressures to designate Turas as a language school advancing an Irish language *for* Protestants.

Ciara: *Have you ever worried that there's a sort of danger from Turas becoming an Irish language exclusive for Protestants, distinct from an Irish language for Catholics?*

Linda: *Well that was, yeah, no that was the one thing we fought against, I mean away back at the start there were a few people who wanted us to call it Gaelic, never refer to it as Irish, and I think kind of taking the attitude of 'we're taking it back', you know, and that's, no, not interested in that, you know, that would have been a horrible. You can imagine what Turas would have been, nasty, narrow, and err you know it could have done that and we could have gone in, you could imagine the nonsense. I mean we could, we could be sitting now as Turas that hates an Irish Language Act and we're Irish speakers and we don't [slams her hands down on the table] want an Irish Language Act, you know, and we would have been used my god, you know, and umm...*

Ciara: *Was that hard to not fall down, not to be framed in those kinds of terms?*

Linda: *Yeah there were times, yeah, there were times at the very beginning when that was, a number of people that's what they wanted, that's the box they wanted to put us in. And we had to resist, you know, and also, you know, there was the kind of sense of oh well you know call it Gaelic, don't call it Irish, they're not going to go for Irish and I remember saying no cos that's a vilification of Irishness, you know, that's saying there's something wrong. I said but I'm Irish, I might be British but I'm still Irish and no I'm not gonna play that game because that's what it was, the minute you went down that road you were saying there's something wrong with being Irish, you know.*

Ciara: *Yeah and I think the whole point of Turas is that it sort of challenges and destabilises those very binary conceptions that being Irish means all this and being British means all that with very little in-between the two of them.*

Linda: *Yeah, yeah and like I say that's what we could of, that could have so easily happened, you know. So easily happened and thankfully we fought it but, umm, you know, I think it was just always good people on-board and you know, so there was something bigger, something bigger.*

Linda's love for the Irish language, a love cultivated in relation to the other bodies active within Turas, operates to prevent the project gaining a sovereignty and control over the language from a territorialised position of Protestantism and Loyalism. Love moves to unsettle traditional binaries and claims of belonging by refusing to engage with a rhetoric seeking to claim the language as exclusive to the Protestant community. To opt for non-sovereignty is to transcend the cultural milieu of the self and the body as a reiteration of a mass being, and move towards the other with a 'willingness to give' and

share in ethical gestures that do not advance exclusive claims of ownership and authority (Lanas and Zembylas 2015: 279). Love, here, cannot be understood as an emotion reserved only for those with whom we are intimate, but an 'ethical agency that motivates a move towards others, across difference' (Oliver 2001: 218). As an ethical agency, love transforms space and breaks sociality open (Massumi 2015: 11), as the body choses 'to move against fear – against alienation and separation' (hooks 2000: 93). Love is a choice of breath.

Once love is chosen, the body is then affected with an obliging commitment to care for this choice (Atkinson, Lawson and Wiles 2011; Lanas and Zembylas 2015; Lawson 2007; Puig de la Bellacasa 2010). The ethical obligation of care and love are not 'a priori universals, they do not define our nature, [but] they have *become* necessary' for living in a relational ecology (Puig de la Bellacasa 2010: 163, original emphasis). Turas moves with a committed care for a love moving in-between. It cultivates a relational way of living in worlds that can, in certain aspects, become stabilised, but only through the continual care for love in response to the particularities and connections of the space. To continue living in a shared ecology we must continue to breathe. Breath cannot be forgotten. The agency of love will only be sustained in the continual respiration of the caring relation (Loyd 2012), a reiteration that is not always easy.

Whilst the Ervine name potentially made Linda's movement towards the Irish language possible, it also makes the choice to continue to nurture and care for this movement difficult. The difficulty of this choice is heightened in the current political climate, and within the hard-line Loyalist community Linda has been vilified. Linda candidly acknowledged her life would be easier without the Ervine name.

> *You know there's times and you know, I mean there's part of me loves Turas, you know, I'm very passionate about it but there have been times before I married my Brian my name was Collins, and I'm telling you there's times when I thought oh god I just want to be Linda Collins again. I want to be Linda Collins. I don't want anybody to know me.*

Care is inherently relational, but the act of caring also forms disconnection. Puig de la Bellacasa (2017: 78) illustrates 'we cannot possibly care for everything, not everything can count in a world, not everything is relevant in a world, in the same way that there is no life without death.' Choosing to enrich and intensify her relation to the Irish language, at least in the beginning, necessitated a heavy reliance of the Ervine name, with the consequence Linda became increasingly disconnected from her maiden name and the anonymity it gave her.[91]

[91] Linda is always framed through the label of David Ervine's sister in law or as Brian Ervine's wife, which represents an image of her that she does not embody. As Linda explains: *"my influences are my family, my influences were communism and socialism and you know, yes I did vote the PUP, I did support David, who was a family friend and things, you know, but that wasn't the influence. So I started to speak out and say now hold on a minute and no, I'm not, my family are communists and Brian said oh god no. I said I'm not gonna pretend to be somebody I'm not, I'm not a Loyalist, I'm not even a Unionist, I never have been and I'm not gonna pretend to be. And at first, you know, it probably suited my purposes, but I think it's not who I am, I don't wanna live a lie."*

Disconnection formed from care can extend as far as the shared relations animated in caring. Linda's care for Turas put a strain on her marriage and her and Brian now live apart.

> *I mean Brian said to me at the time, you know, we're the last stick here Linda, you know, he said we'll have no frigging windows, you know…there's been times when he's been very critical of me as well and you know, it's, I mean it's been very tough, you know, because Brian and I are not politically on the same page and I think that's, I never, I didn't realise that it wasn't important before and then all of a sudden it became very important. Like I was out there saying things that he was kinda not too sure of, you know…. I mean Brian is very supportive of me, you know, teaching and very supportive of me in this job but another part of Brian wanted me, wanted me to go out and do all these things and be successful but he also wanted me to be in the house making the dinner. Do you know and life changed and he could not, he couldn't adapt to it and then at the same time as this was happening with me, his life started to go downhill, he'd taken ill, he'd had a number of operations, he lost his job, you know, and life changed for him too… And you know, I think being in a lot of pain didn't help his mood very much and I think I avoided him, I think I, you know, I engrossed myself, because obviously I was free and I was, you know, I'd never done anything like this before and it was all consuming, you know. And I suppose I felt I had an awful lot to prove and umm, and it was a lot of pressure, I mean I was the only member of staff basically, that was it, so I was working nine to nine and this thing's just taking off, it just took a life of its own and I was running everywhere, you know, and I think I was probably hiding as well, I was probably just you know, escaping. So, the marriage just broke down and I moved out.*

Linda has chosen to care for Turas, for the growth of the Irish language in east Belfast, and for the blossoming of the bodies who attend the various classes on offer. Yet, choosing to embody this gesture of care has formed intimate and lasting disconnections. To choose care entails huge sacrifices and Linda made many sacrifices before she was aware they had even been chosen: 'still I have very little that can be described as "choice" in the original orientation' (Povinelli 2011: 33). I asked Linda if knowing everything she did know, in knowing the sacrifice and disconnection entailed and the obligation and responsibility for caring for Turas, would she do it again and she replied: "*I don't, I really don't know*". Linda's choice to nurture and care for her loving relation to the language may not be easy but it is, and has been, transformative.

Care is not a gesture moving only towards the other. As Puig de la Bellacasa (2017: 219) illustrates: 'the cared for coforms the carer too'. The making of Linda's body and life blossoms in her care for the Irish language. As Linda wrote in a Facebook post on the 12th July 2014 and shared again five years later:

> Sometime people ask me why I am learning the Irish language and what use it is. My answer is this. Having knowledge of the language has *enriched my life*. I now understand the meaning of our place name and surnames…I have met lots of great people from all over the world and made many new friends. I have gained many new qualifications and enjoy the feeling of achievement as I improve my language skills. I have been introduced to traditional music and dance and have through my love for the language and culture gained a new respect and interest in Ulster Scots. I haven't

> changed my religious or political viewpoint but I have learnt an awful lot about the Irish language and its link to Protestants (Ervine 2014: n.p., my emphasis).

Linda, here, illustrates how in caring for the Irish language, the language has also cared for the blossoming and growth of her body. The Irish language has not appropriated her body, her political viewpoint, or religion. Caring for Gaelic has enriched Linda's life and provided a relation within which Linda has thrived and found purpose, whilst also caring for her body at a time when her health was deteriorating. As Linda voiced in our conversation: "*We have found the cure for loneliness and depression and it's called the Irish langue because why would anybody be sitting in the house when there's a whole world, you know, it's social.*" Care is not an isolated act but a relational act bodies share in and are enriched by.

An obligation to care is not about being in charge, but about being involved (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017). The various bodies who attend Turas are entangled in situated relations of care and love for Turas and Gaelic. Whilst a relation of care may be what connects the bodies active in the space of Turas, who is caring and who is cared for becomes blurred in the entanglement of caring gestures. Care is shared, distributed, and returned. It folds in-between; a respiring oscillation moving from the inside to the outside, for the carer to the cared, and back again. This is not to align care to an external morality. Care in-between does 'not require a recognition but describes a creative engagement that relies on…an opening to surprise' (Schrader 2015: 9). This surprise fills the body with wonder and wanders it beyond what it was previously. Yet, just as the body will only be realised in the movement of becoming, where it wanders the carer and the cared for cannot be pre-determined. The subject of care is left unknown, the act of care is undetermined, and bodies and relational gestured remain in movement as immanent space-times are reconfigured to the respiration of the present ecology (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017). The worlds and relations that arise from approaching both the self and the other with ethical gestures of care may remain speculative, but this fragility and uncertainty folds in-between all the bodies that have, and continue, to approach Turas in love.

7.6 Conclusion: A living commoning

The weaving of peace-as-peace moves with worlds in which sociality and constitutive relations of difference cannot be grounded in a horizon granting an originary position for agonism and violence. This chapter has embodied such a movement. It moves with an ecological and relational horizon in which difference is not read as necessarily violent, divisive, or conflictual but as a shared, relational blossoming of living vitality. This is a movement extending beyond critique and engaging with the always-already present relations of peace, weaving the incipient and speculative making of ecological relationalities that are at once aerial, shared, and *ethical*.

The ethics of an ecological horizon cannot be reduced to a normative, predetermined moral standard. Ethics are situated, everyday, embodied, and intimate respirations caring for the living vitality of all

bodies and the shared relations in-between. They are the gestures caring for the aches and pains of the body and a tender touch responsive to the present body. They are moments of stillness and calm, and actions caring for the space of unknown bodies. Care is voiced in calls of faith, in words of encouragement, and in a commitment to connectivity. Caring respires with reciprocal loving obligations, with difficult choices of engagement, and with aerial movements against and across divisions and boundaries. These gestures of care require continual enactment. Care necessitates a constant reciprocal folding moving with the wonder and surprise of living. Constant articulations of care are always emergent, situated, and responsive.

Although always situated, an ethics of care holds the potential to move with spaces and relations beyond those of its enactment. Ethical respirations of care are necessarily speculative, they are the opening onto a hopefulness about what the possible can involve (Puig de la Bellacasa 2017). Hope for shared worlds and a peaceful horizon potentially animates the continual enactment of caring gestures (Conradson 2011), which are the making of ecological living that has a 'provisional consistency or coherence' but one that cannot be limited to the 'stability and coherence of a political regime' (Collier and Lakoff 2005: 31-33). Peace cannot be constructed from above. It cannot be a predetermined, external vision that everyday actions and doings must align to. Shared, peaceful worlds must retain the contingency and dynamism of the everyday onto-ethical relations that are their making. It is this speculative making that prevents the imposition of an external commonality and consensus.

To reach-towards another body in an ethics of care is not to reinstate a forgotten commonness. Peace will not be a product of commonality determined a priori. Tolerant attitudes may reconfigure the Catholic-Protestant binary to become less-than-violent, but they remain firmly rooted to a dualistic horizon, only now opposition is displaced with commonness.[92] We must stop searching for consensus that understands the other as a person with whom we are in common through the imposition of an external and universal moral norm. Opposed to demanding cohesion, unity, and integration, peace will be the making of an open commonality. To be living is to be in relation and this relation is always-already a respiring commoning.

What is shared in relational becoming, in an ecology of breath, is not subsumed into a singular 'person' or one world. Commonality is not found in the ubiquitous and ceaseless recognition of mass territorial roots and communal orientations, with an assumption that I not only exist but that you can also be convinced to recognise yourself in my image. Commoning is an ethical sharing of care for living vitality in and across difference, for the potentialities and possibilities of other bodies and other worlds that are always-already necessarily different from the capacity and the potential of my body and world (Marder 2016: 204). This is a sharing that can never be reduced to what is *in* common but a sharing of

[92] Difference and differential process may be negated, at least amongst 'persons', but difference per se is still read as necessarily agonistic, division, or violent. An ethics of tolerance forecloses every potential for peaceful relation, as we continue in a cyclical movement of critique searching for irreducible conflict and violence.

autonomy in relationality; a sharing of the continual becoming and distancing of the first, autonomous breath. To quote Irigaray (2002b: 67): 'air is what is left common between subjects living in different worlds.'

Commoning respires with possibilities that are never complete. There is an ever-present danger that fixing the activity of commoning in definitions and rationalisations will close off spaces of making. Commoning without an in common 'must continuously trace its own escape within and beneath the 'I'' (Manning 2011: 106); it must continually respire with the never halting movement of breath. Commoning does not shape an essential being composing a singular whole but is the dissensus of emerging becomings within the ecological horizon of life-living in the making (Manning 2013). Rather than thinking of commoning as a positivity with clear contents and outlines, commoning must continually be advanced 'as a *negativity* with potential to become' (Gibson-Graham 2006a: xv, original emphasis). The commoning of breath is not the common (neutral) ground that peace processes driven by the dominant macropolitical seek to construct, but an incipient commoning 'beyond community and commonality' (Manning 2013: 201): a commonality in breath.

Conclusions

It won't always be like this. It is going to be better.
(Lyra McKee 2019: n.p.)

8.1 Introduction

On the 9th September 2019, less than five months after the death of Lyra McKee, trouble broke out on the streets of Derry once again. Mirroring the violence witnessed earlier in the year, PSNI officers were met with petrol bomb on the street of Creggan as they carried out searches targeting dissident Republicans. They located an explosive device that had been marked for attacking a police patrol (The Guardian 2019b). The stories voicing the rise of Republican dissident activity, of the continual failure to re-establish Stormont, of the possible violence in response to a hard border, and of the violent workings of binary identity politics are undoubtedly important to tell. Yet, these cannot continue to be the only stories told about Northern Ireland. Violence and division must not sustain an originary position.

A week after violence erupted on the streets of Derry, Turas opened its doors after the summer break for the first day of the new academic term. An unprecedented number of people turned up to the total beginners' class on the Monday morning, with even more people attending the same class on Tuesday evening. With so many people attending the concurrent post beginners' and total beginners' classes on the Tuesday evening, *sos* had to be staggered; there were too many people to fit into the new kitchen at one time. As Linda Ervine (2019: n.p.) declared on Facebook, it is 'a good problem to have.' Amongst the common and dominant stories of violence and binary division, everyday Belfast pulsates with gestures, relations, and activities of care, respect, love, and connectivity that together weave an alternative narrative. Peace does respire within the streets of Northern Ireland and we cannot continue to reduce this respiration to violence, petrol bombs, and death. It is an autonomous respiration, active alongside the enduring violence, but irreducible to it.

In this thesis, I have applied and extended insights from Luce Irigaray's philosophy to the question of an everyday, positive, relational ontology of peace. I have mobilised, both theoretically and empirically, the encounter as an intimate relation of differentiation active within the practice of breathing. My empirical investigation tracing the movements, tempo, rhythms, and relations of breath in the space of Turas and the practice of language learning, have strengthened, augmented, and created additional insights beyond geographical theories of peace and the encounter. Mobilising a creative and inventive feminist politics, my arguments have constructed the following as accounts: curiosity and desire as constituting the becoming of 'queer' movements exceeding the inherited truths that orientate contemporary bodies and worlds in Northern Ireland to stasis; encounters as relations of differentiation in proximity, which through the interplay of wonder, silence, and sharing make an ecological, aerial horizon; and peace as woven through an affective and loving ethics of care committed not to the in-

common but the continually becoming of commoning. These accounts challenge the extant and dominant theorisations of everyday, positive peace. While peace research traditionally conceives of differences as necessarily divisive and agonistic, I have rethought differences as extant, relational, dynamic, and autonomous becomings that all bodies share in. This is an understanding that requires we re-evaluate underlying assumptions of sociality and our relationship to and with ourselves, others, and worlds.

I am wholly aware of my optimism both here and throughout the overarching narrative of the thesis. Yet, this is a position I have consciously chosen in order to voice an alternative – and desperately needed – narrative. The stories I have told do not naively avoid violence; they are stories replete with tensions. I have sought to engage firmly with the present day to tell stories of peace, but this has not entailed avoiding the stories that voice the dark and violent legacies left by the Troubles. The stories told move with the tensions between sharing and separation, between the internal and the external, between autonomy and relationality, between listening and hearing, between the silence of encounters and the hushed silence of self-policing. Tensions between peace and violence, and between different theoretical and ontological positions, have not been dismissed. Yet the continuous circle of critique has been exceeded. Tensions are not engaged with in a movement of incessant deferral but are held together in the active creation and storying of creativity and transformation. This is not to remain within the stasis of 'what is' but to opt for speculative potentiality of world-making.

As an activity of making, this study reveals how moments of peace, woven in often silent relations of differentiation in proximity are *as originary* as moments of violence, agonism, and conflict. Among the continuing presence of a divisive political rhetoric and the violent eruption of riots and petrol bombs, there are spaces respiring with gestures of and commitments to care. War is not the only story. Gestures and relations of peace cannot be left unexamined and under theorised. Exposing the peace, care, and love in banal activities such as language learning allows for the telling of important and extant stories of everyday contemporary Northern Ireland. The political climate of today accentuates the need for such stories and, potentially, beyond the context of Northern Ireland.

This final concluding chapter reflects upon the small stories of peace which have been told. It, first, pulls out and draws together the theoretical, practical, and methodological implications for social sciences, the weaving of peace, and related arenas of work. Second, it considers openings to future research.

8.2 Implications of Research

A series of implications can be drawn from this research. These implications are both academic and practical and they have theoretical, methodological, and pragmatic consequences for the question of peace and for geography. This thesis has mobilised a conceptualisation of peace advanced by the geographies of peace literature: peace as a fragile, contingent, situated, and positive process of shared social practices and relations firmly grounded in the everyday. Wholly committing to this theorisation,

the thesis contributes to more dynamic conceptualisation of peace and to more transformative practices of micropolitical peace-weaving that geographers and others have called for. Yet, the contributions of this thesis stem from a different theoretical starting point, more concerned with a feminist approach of world-making than the critiques of critical geopolitics and critical geography.

I have mobilised an ontology of peace that is relational, aerial, ecological, and everyday. This is not necessarily a novel ontology, as its roots can be traced back to the thinking of Jane Addams in the early twentieth century. Yet, this is an ontology that has largely been overlooked despite the potential it holds for altering how we think about, and engage with, the question of peace. A relational, ecological ontology opens onto a capacity to theoretically and empirically move with the always-already active relations, doings, and gestures of peace that are as originary as, but crucially independent from, instances of violence and division. I have provided a positive empirical study of everyday activities and practices that mitigate against conflict and division and cultivate positive relations: the choices of love, the gestures of care, the commitments to connectivity, the respect of silence, the animation of 'queer' movements, and the actions of listening-to. In doing so, I have begun to trace how peaceful relations emerge. The question of peace relies as much upon speculative, everyday intervention of peace-weaving, as it does on positions of critique. Peace-weaving demands an alternative starting point and one that cannot be grounded in a Catholic-Protestant binary or any other us-them identarian frames. Peace needs other geographers to take up this alternative starting point and provide other examples of peace, care, love, and connectivity.

This is not necessarily a call for others to engage with Irigaray's ontology – whilst I do believe this to be important – but more a call for the invention and creativity of world-making. It is a call to start from the varying and various ontologies of difference that are peaceful relations. I appeal to those interested in the geographies of peace to find the alternative starting point that inspires them so we can, together, begin to cultivate a portfolio of peaceful examples. Such empirical engagement, I suggest, require the movements of an ephemeral, relational vector – such as breath – that holds the potential to animate alternative forms of 'knowing' that, although speculative, retain political implications. This requires a movement beyond the tropes of critical geopolitics and critical geography. Cultural geographers interested in relational, ephemeral, and embodied research 'subjects' have something to offer to the questions of politics and peace.

An approach capable of attending to everyday practice of peace does not only implicate theoretical and empirical engagements with peace. I am keen to emphasise such an approach is not merely an academic exercise but one with practical implications. The Northern Irish Peace Process doubtlessly achieved a great deal. Northern Ireland today, however, is facing unprecedented challenges: Stormont has now been suspended for thirty-three months; Brexit is on the horizon and possibly the return of a hard border; and, peacebuilding work is navigating a precarious and pressurised funding environment, whilst becoming crippled with fatigue. The Northern Ireland Executive has recognised peace to reside in

building everyday connections and relations that transcend cultural, territorial, and political boundaries. Yet, at the same time, it is these divides that cement the continuation of those in power, while those in power continue to position themselves as the leaders of peace. What emerged as particularly interesting during the research, was a disjuncture between the CTS*'s peacebuilding work and the activities of Turas. The structure of funding forces the CTS* to align their peacebuilding training packages and programs to a vision set forth by the political elite. Turas, in contrast, has largely been removed from these structures and, thus, when it has tapped into peacebuilding funding it has made the associated requirements align to the practices and activities already active within the space. Whilst CTS* operates within a system wherein peace is due to trickle down from the top, Turas is an organic space of peace-weaving which was conceived not with the aim of building peace but through transformative obligations of care and love.

Turas illustrates the potential of a Peace Process that connects with the creativity, inventiveness, and care of everyday bodies and practices across a variety of spaces. This should be of interest to the wider structures of peace: to the Northern Executive Office who are responsible for good relations and social change; to the Community Relations Council who are tasked with promoting better community relations and recognition of cultural diversity; to organisations in the community and voluntary sector doing peacebuilding work across territorial and cultural divisions; and to the funding bodies investing in the Northern Irish Peace Process. My contribution, then, is undoubtedly philosophical, but it has the political relevance that, while not necessarily providing definitive answers, challenges the workings of the Northern Irish Peace Process, the structure of funding, and the political elite vision of peace. It poses important questions of how peacebuilding learns from, and builds upon, the transformation and creativity respiring in everyday spaces that *are* weaving peace.

I would contend that thesis also proposes a series of implications for those interested in the geographies of encounter. First, sustained encounters arise much earlier than their manifestation, particularly in spaces as divided as Belfast. Bodies that move towards Turas rarely do so on a whim. Rather, there is a whole process of relationality, connectivity, questioning, and disconnection active *prior to* the 'principal' encounter. I chose to engage with this process through the concepts and movements of curiosity and desire, but other concepts are needed. There is, thus, an urgency for geographers engaging with encounters to broaden their focus and attend to the situated relations and disconnections that animate a movement *towards* spaces of encounter. These relations and movements are just as important and insightful as what happens *in* the encounter. What is more, the latter requires the insights animated through an engagement with the former.

This thesis was a direct response to Helen Wilson and Jonathon Darling's (2016) call for critical engagement from within geography regarding what happens *in* spaces of encounter. I opted to think the activity of the encounter, in dialogue with Luce Irigaray, through the wonder, silence, and sharing of breath. I am not claiming these are the only activities of the encounter and breath to be the only vector

from which to engage with the event of the encounter. Yet, I have illustrated how the geographies of peace literature needs to form relations and connections with ontologies of difference to begin to analyse the workings of encounters. Thus, and this is where the next implication lies, encounters are not empty but replete with activities, movements, silences, affects, and risks, and it is only when we attend to these that we, as geographers, will truly begin to account for the transformative *and* political potential of encounters.

There have been suggestions among geographers that meaningful encounters, wherein attitudes and relations across difference are transformed, are rare and have been 'romanticised' (see Clayton 2009; Leitner 2012; Matejskova and Leitner 2011; Mayblin, Valentine and Anderson 2015; Valentine 2008, 2010). Whilst this is partly a critique regarding the lack of research detailing what happens in encounters, it is a position that 'call for a more careful account of the inequalities and relations of power' operating within and shaping the effects of encounters (Wilson 2017a: 460). Though valuable, such a call risks – mirroring the geographies of peace literature – constructing an originary position for agonism and violence and, in turn, the less-than-meaningful or non-meaningful encounter. To commit to encounters as opening onto transformative relations of care, love, and connectivity is not, however, to forgo critical engagement. Approaching the activity and outcome of encounters in Turas through sharing, did not foreclose a critical analysis of the novel borders erected by this space. Engaging with care as predicate of peace did not prevent an attentiveness to the disconnections yielded in opting for care. Yet, the erection of novel borders and emerging disconnections do not undermine the meaningfulness of encounters or their transformative potential and, so, we cannot dismiss them as such. Encounters and relations within Turas may not broadly rewrite the city of Belfast, but the immanence of the alternative future they create does disrupt 'what is' and opens onto the hope of a different horizon moving before the imposition of dualistic form. Just as I contend the need to commit to peace-as-peace, I also appeal to geographers to commit to encounters as everyday transformative events.

Luce Irigaray's philosophy has provided the theoretical foundation of this thesis. This is perhaps an unprecedented foundation for geographers engaging in peace and, perhaps, a rare theoretical foundation for geographers in general. Irigaray's thinking has a lot to offer geography. Her thinking – particularly in its third aspect – offers a novel perspective for considering the politics of peace, everyday encounters, and ethical coexistence amongst difference. Yet, the potential of her thinking for geography extends far further. For example, her theory of sexuate difference could be engaged with more widely among feminist geographers and those engaging with inequalities between men and women, while her thinking around nature, culture, and vegetal life offers insights for animal geographies, those engaging with the non-human, and work rethinking the relationship between nature and culture. Furthermore, Irigaray's thinking can be put in, if not always easy, then productive conversations with thinkers widely used in geography including Sara Ahmed, Erin Manning, and María Puig de la Bellacasa, as I have demonstrated, but also Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, and Jane Bennett. Margaret Whitford (1991a: 6, original emphasis) has argued: 'the important thing is to engage with Irigaray *in order to go beyond*

her.' It is, as I hope to have shown, by engaging with but, also, pushing beyond her thinking that Irigaray's philosophy offers the most for geography.

Irigaray's thinking also has much to offer beyond the realm of philosophy. Irigaray argues she lives through her philosophical thinking and it lives through her. There are difficulties and tensions in applying Irigaray' philosophy to 'real life' and I am aware this can result in perhaps a reductive use of Irigaray's work, as well as a disservice to the lived worlds of people and place. Yet, the potentialities that arise from experimenting with Irigaray's thought override concerns of reduction. Engaging with the encounter as a relation of differentiation in proximity composed via the element of breath may, at first, seem somewhat abstract, but it has been in drawing out oscillating tensions between relationality and autonomy that I have been able to reveal practical implications for peace, sharing, and ethics. The problem at hand is that relationality and autonomy or, relatedly, sharing and difference are approached as two separate processes and two different forms of sociality. Relationality and sharing are purported as peaceful, while autonomy and difference are disregarded as violent and divisive. Peace processes then become predicated upon displacing difference with commonness. Yet, it is by holding relationality and autonomy in tension that alternative, peace-full worlds will be created in which there is neither a reduction to oppositional sameness or an external imposition of equivalent sameness; living must respire in-between verticality and horizontality.

Engaging with Irigaray philosophy from a geographic position valuing fieldwork, has prompted a series of methodological implications. Irigaray's thinking suggests a methodological approach characterised by openness, being in-between, and excess and geographers may find, as I have, an engagement with Irigaray's work offers productive methodological lines of flight. Geography has increasingly become concerned with creative methodologies and methods. A methodology of tracing provides an accessible and productive opening towards creativity. While tracing is not necessarily a call for novel, highly creative research methods, a methodological position of tracing does, however, alter how we engage with traditional research methods. I suggest before we search for and embrace novel and creative methods, there is value in making common geographic methods dance a little, a capacity which arises with novel methodological positions such as tracing. A methodology of tracing can be applied to other geographical areas of interest, particularly where the research focus is more ephemeral and embodied such as affect, wonder, enchantment, vital materialism, and elemental geographies. Just because something is not perceptible does not mean that it cannot be researched. Yet, it will require an entangled, situated, embodied, excessive, and relational methodological position.

Finally, this thesis has implications for understanding everyday Northern Ireland for those living it. Irigaray's thinking around standardisation and inherited truth, offers a lens for understanding the stasis of violence in contemporary times. Standardisation engages with the past through the present, rather than simply imposing the past onto the present. Attending to the dance of recognition as a prefiltered performance, animated the insight that recognition is not always compelled by fear per se, but from a

fear of offending the other. Whilst this still reduces bodies to objects, these nuances and shifts in the narrative are key to understanding contemporary Northern Ireland.

Northern Ireland is facing unprecedented challenges. There are concerns the 'achievements' of the Good Friday Agreement could be undermined. Yet amongst territorial segregation, political division, violent dissident activity, and a possible hard border, there are reasons to be hopeful. Everyday bodies and spaces *are* weaving peace-full relations and creating an alternative peace-full horizon. As Turas and Linda Ervine's own story voice, a commitment to this creation is not an easy choice but it is transformative. Peace for Northern Ireland exists in the future, but the moments, gestures, relations, and spaces of its creations are immanent, and it is in committing to their reiteration that the future of peace moves always closer. Perhaps, then, an implication of this thesis lies in affirming the difficult commitments people of Northern Ireland are making for the sake of a better and peace-full future.

The implications I have drawn out are by no means exhaustive. I would ask others to read this thesis in the way I have engaged with both literature and with the field: push my thinking beyond me. To search for and create novel and, perhaps speculative, theoretical and practical relations and connections from the stories I have told. The tensions animated in such interaction should not be flattened but explored as novel and productive movements of wonder arise in-between. Stories of peace, of Northern Ireland, of encounters and relations, and of an Irigarayan geography must continue to breathe.

8.3 Openings to Future Research

The stories told in this thesis are not created from a linear journey. They emerge out of a tracing characterised by false starts, halting stops, unsurprising changes of direction, uncomfortable turns, difficult choices, and unexpected opportunities. The stories told could have been woven into many different narratives, whilst other stories remain untold. Before closing, then, it seems pertinent to briefly consider potential avenues for future research. These future avenues utilise the narrative that has been told as a starting point from which to weave, build on and further trouble the unfinished findings voiced in this project.

The implications of this thesis largely stem from Turas. Yet, my engagement with this space was not exhaustive. Turas is growing and its activities are widening. At the beginning of this academic year it opened an Irish language library in the Skainos centre, and it is continuing to pursue the vision of an Irish Medium nursery and primary school in east Belfast. Turas offers Gaelic tours of east Belfast that year on year are increasing in popularity, and coordinates the *Féil Conn O'Neill* which celebrates the last Gaelic Lord of east Belfast. These widening activities offer potential spaces for future research. Additionally, there are a plethora of other everyday spaces in which the question of peace could be approached through the vector of breath, these include communal choirs, yoga studios, sports clubs, amateur dramatics groups, dance schools, walking clubs, and cycling clubs. An interesting space to begin

my next research endeavour would be with the collaboration between the Hounds of Ulster and the McCullough-Curran School of Irish dance.

The Hounds of Ulster are a traditional Irish and Ulster Scots music group whose roots are firmly located in the Unionist marching band tradition. Marching bands in Northern Ireland – much like the Irish language – are controversial. They are synonymous with Loyalism, with the 12th of July celebrations and, ultimately, with violence and intimidation towards the Catholic community. In contrast, Irish dancing is firmly aligned to the communal Catholic line of orientation. In 2015 the Hounds of Ulster and McCullough-Curran School of Irish dance came together to perform a specially choreographed short Irish dance to the traditional music of marching bands (McParland 2017, see figure 25). Since 2015 the collaboration between the two groups has grown and, to date, they have performed across Belfast, at Stormont, at the All Ireland Final in Croke Park in Dublin, at the European Parliament in Strasbourg, at the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann and, most recently, for the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall when they visited Northern Ireland in May 2019.

Figure. 25. Hounds of Ulster with the McCullough-Curran School of Irish dance on the 6th June 2019 (Hounds of Ulster 2019: n.p.).

Participation between the Ulster Hounds and the Irish dancers challenges the cultural, territorial, and identarian divisions of Northern Ireland. It provides a further space to attend to everyday, relational weavings of peace through the vector of *air*. Furthermore, this collaboration provides an interesting space to consider the tensions between sustained and fleeting encounters: the two groups come together on a sustained basis, but the performances are fleeting encounters for their audiences. The collaboration also offers a space for attending to the interaction between violence and peace across generations in Northern Ireland, and an interesting space to consider the workings of inherited truths, and their stasis, with regards to the living and dynamic vitality of relationality and extant gestures of care. In thinking through air and, so, the question of peaceful and ethical atmospheres and performance, this project would add to an understanding of an embodied ontology of peace. What is more, an attention to elemental, speculative atmospheres open a path for considering more overtly the question of a peace-full commoning gestured to in this thesis: an enveloping and politics that is not territorial but aerial and atmospheric.

The thesis animated an account of peace weaving situated in the context of post-conflict Northern Ireland. War has, however, inflicted countries across the world and many post-conflict and war-torn nations are faced with the question of peace. Ontological and relational accounts of peace promote understandings and practices of peace that 'are contextual and variable across time and space' (Bregazzi and Jackson 2018: 88). This thesis offers a starting point for attending to everyday, already-active relations of peacebuilding in other countries and nations that is contextually attentive to how differences emerge and influence peace in the socio-spatio context in question. Putting different situated accounts in dialogue will build up a more comprehensive understanding of the weaving of peace and no doubt such dialogues would animate new movements of peace-weaving, open new avenues for research, and produce new challenges to grapple with.

The question of peace extends far beyond violence and war. A project seeking and detailing political alternatives to hierarchical and conflictual binaries, which potentially emerge within everyday relations across difference, has taken on greater urgency in recent times (Fincher et al. 2019). In the current political climate of polarisation and extremism, addressing questions of peace, care, ethics, and sharing are as important as ever. Identity, on both the political right and left, is 'wielded as a weapon in public discourses' (Jones 2019: 110) which, in turn, promotes and compels extreme positions and actions in the everyday. This thesis provides a springboard for considering a politics not of hate and identity, but of love and communing – a shift from a genealogical, rooted identity to ecological, aerial relationalities. Thus, potentially, the thesis opens onto an avenue of future research engaging with peace and sharing not in war-torn and post-conflict states, but with states facing acute challenges from increasing political extremes.

8.4 An Open Ending

In its wake, this thesis leaves perhaps more questions than answers. There are many loose ends calling out for attention. Yet, I never set out to provide definitive answers, to determine what it meant to be Catholic or Protestant in Northern Ireland or to name the multiple and varying differences that are emerging. I did not aim to produce a conclusive representation of what happens in encounters nor did I intend to construct a static vision of what gestures of care look like. These are not possible.

My desire was to trace breath in its situated and entangling movements. I hoped to be an embodied, attentive, and compassionate researcher who listened-to the people, space, and relations of Northern Ireland. I sought to tell the small stories that mattered to this space and these people, and to weave a narrative that spoke, if speculatively, of something novel, transformative, and peace-full. This is unlikely to change the normative stasis and division characterising contemporary Belfast or put an end to violence. Nor will it halt the eruption of dissident paramilitary activity, solve the issues of the Northern Irish border, or prompt the reinstating of Stormont. Yet, at the everyday, micropolitical level 'something' is happening, and we cannot continue to be ignored this 'something'. It is an everyday, modest transformation wherein people are living and acting beyond, before, and in excess of rooted divisions and normative identarian orientations, as they choose to care for relations in-between differences, and to answer curious calls and embodied desires. This transformation of living, relating, and becoming holds the capacity to change our understanding of Northern Ireland, of peace, and of difference and 'to change our understanding *is* to change the world in small and sometimes major ways (Gibson-Graham 2008: 615, original emphasis).

My research has shown peace to be the making of everyday, care-full relations woven in-between bodies and worlds to actively unfold an alternative, transformed horizon we are always-already part of. The shared worlds, bodies, and relations active within such a horizon cannot be known; they reside in the 'groundless ground' of the future. We cannot then approach peace as a blueprint to be achieved, but neither should we seek to engineer a novelty that has never before been experienced. Peace exists in the future but, as this thesis illustrates, this is an immanent future respiring in the present.

To move with breath is not to confine the making of worlds, and the extant process of peace-weaving present within them, to stasis. To move with breath is to animate an extant, embodied openness to dynamic and speculative potentialities, possibilities, and creations always-already unfolding within the now. To move with breath is to not know where you will end or, more precisely, to not have an ending.

Epilogue

Breathing the continual weaving of peace

Siting crossed legged with his guitar resting gently on his knees, his low, timbred voice began to move with the sounds and rhythm of a gentle Celtic tune. The music filled the air and drew in the bodies sitting relaxed on their yoga mats. Whether prompted by a nod of the head or simply by a compelling sensation to actively participate in this moment, a voice somewhere else in the room began to sing. A soft, high pitched tone interlaced with the low, timbred sounds, quiet a first but quickly growing in depth and resonance.

Other tones were soon folding into the melody. Different voices, words, and sounds touched upon one and other as the air swelled with a shared harmony. I did not know the words, but found my body beginning to stir, to move, to connect. A gentle, embodied humming added to the tune. The sounds of my own breath rose and swirled within the air, where it became entangled among the other tones and voices. It was not the usual close to a yoga practice, but an energy filled my body and pulsed around the room.

The sounds became louder, richer, and more alive, as a breath weaved in-between the bodies in the making of a shared, present world. A composure, a peace, a caring gentleness woven from sharing in the breath of this Gaelic tune.

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